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SOME VEDIC PRINCIPLES

AS

VIEWED BY A MOOSLIM

BY

Hbu Hbdullah

Md. Zakaulah Khan, m. a. p.c.s.

To be had from the Author

OR

From Sitla Bax Shaiq (Lucknowi)

G O R A K H P U R .

PRICE ANNAS 8.

Preface.

I need not apologise for writing these few lines by way of preface to this little pamphlet. I must inform my readers that I am not at all accustomed to writing to periodicals or otherwise and the articles which—constitute the present pamphlet were practically my first effort if a short essay on the Rights of Women be left out of account which I had—written in my College days at Aligarh and which was also published in a pamphlet form.

From my inexperience in the line I am afraid the readers will find much in these pages which will appear to them uncouth and unseemly.

But I present to my readers the thoughts contained in this little pamphlet for what they are worth.

The book of a friend of mine Babu Ganga Prashad, M. A , M R. A. S , a very enthusiastic Aryan gentleman, a member of several important sabhas and a member of the body of trustees who manage the property left by Swami Daya Nand Saraswati entitled ‘‘The fountain-head of Religion’’ originally gave rise to these articles.

The first four articles deal particularly with the book of Babu Ganga Prashad. The last four articles are more general. They deal with the general position taken up by the Arya Samajists.

This pamphlet is not in any way meant to discuss the Vedic religion as understood by the generality of our Hindoo brethren but as interpreted, inculcated and expounded by the Arya Samajists.

I give this pamphlet to the public with two objects,

It will be conceded that the attitude of the generality of Aria Samajists is very presumptuous and nearly all the principal religions of the world meet with very little consideration at their hands. From Swami Daya Nand Saraswati downwards one of the principal occupations of the men of light and learning among them is to criticise other religions. As far as my own religion is concerned I am never afraid of fair criticism. But the criticism of our friends is seldom fair or well-informed.

One of the objects of this pamphlet is to show that the position taken up by the Arya Samajists is not as strong as they are pleased to think.

The other object is to make my own english educated co-religionists interested in religious matters.

There has been any amount of interperation of Islam and the prophet of Islam in the press during the recent years.

If the perusal of what is said in these pages can make my english educated brethren more interested in religious matters I will consider my efforts poor as they are amply rewarded.

M. ZUKA ULLAH.

6-4-12.

CHAPTER I.

MY friend B. Ganga Parshad, M. A. Deputy Collector, presented me with his book "The Fountain-Head of Religion." The author himself calls the Book a comparative study of the principal Religions of the World.

I got the book just to-day and a cursory perusal of the same excited in me a great inclination to say something about it. The temptation was so tantalizing and some of the statements contained in the book were so inviting of a repartee that I could not resist the temptation, and began to put down my thoughts on paper on the very day that I got the book, and the greater part of this chapter was penned that very day.

Before commencing to deal with the book in detail, I would like to pass a few remarks on the central theme of the book which is this:—Muhammadanism is based on Judaism ; Christianity on Judaism and Buddhism; Buddhism on Vedic religion; Judaism is based on Zoroastrianism and Zoroastrianism is based on the Vedic religion, and, therefore, all the great religions of the world are based on the Vedic religion.

I am really at a loss to understand what our author means by one religion being based upon another. This argument may be appropriate in the mouth of an atheistic philosopher like Darwin or Herbert Spencer, who do not believe in the Divine Origin of religions, and who believe that religions are the result of the gradual evolution of Human Mind—that our ideas of right and wrong, of good and bad, benevolence and humanity and of God and his attributes have evolved by degrees in the course of ages.

But such arguments certainly sound odd in the mouth of our author, and those of his cult, who apparently believe in the Divine Origin of religion, in God and in Revelations. The main question is whether our author believes in Divine Revelations or not, *i. e.*, whether he believes that God reveals His

will to man for the guidance of mankind or not. If he does not, we have no quarrel with him—our standpoints are different and we cannot agree in our conclusions. But, evidently our author and those of his thinking believe that God sometimes reveals his will to mankind; they also believe that Vedas are such Divine Revelations.

After this admission, I don't see what reason on earth can make him reject the claim of other religions to be Divine Revelations. If God revealed His will to the Rishis and Munis who composed the Vedas, and who are by the way vague, unknown and fictitious characters at least in comparison to the Prophets of other religions, there is no reason whatever that He should not have revealed His will to an Abraham, a Moses, a Christ and a Muhammad.

If it is one of the laws of God that when darkness and ignorance should prevail on earth, when human beings should become immersed in false ideas and false worship, when they should become as much allied to brute beasts as human nature is capable of, He should, from time to time, send His divinely-inspired Rishis and Munis, Prophets and divinely chosen few to instruct mankind and to redeem the Earth from falsehood, and superstition, from ignorance and beastly habits, from idol worship and from the worship of sun, moon and stars, from the worship of trees, and the worship of images of earth, stone and brass, from the worship of demons, and a thousand other deities with human shortcomings, frailties and passions, it stands to reason that if the Vedic Rishis and Munis were inspired beings, Abraham, Moses, Christ and Muhammad were equally inspired personages.

Go through the whole of the book "The Fountain-Head of Religion" read it from chapter to chapter and from line to line, and you won't find a single argument to support the contention that the Rishis and Munis of Vedic times were divinely-inspired

beings, while the Prophets of Judaism, Christianity and Islam were not so.

If the narrow view of our author and those of his sect be accepted, it would naturally lead to two inevitable conclusions; (1) that God after revealing His will to the Rishis and Munis in the Vedic age, sat idle and renounced all future connection with the moral government of the world; (2) that human nature is essentially perverse, that the highest intellects and the noblest characters which history knows of are not free from dissimulation and falsehood.

As to the 1st.—In discussing this topic several questions naturally arise:—

(a) Whether Vedic religion was ever the religion of mankind or of a considerable portion of it?

(b) When Vedic religion ceased to be so worldwide?

(c) When it was altogether superseded by the popular Hinduism, and when the Sanskrit language, *i. e.*, the dialect in which the Vedas are written, ceased to be a spoken language?

As to (a) our Arya friends volubly claim that in old old antiquity when their holy religion was taught and learnt in its pristine purity, it was the religion of the whole world, and the whole world was guided by its moral precepts. Here I would ask my friends whether this assertion of theirs possesses any more value than that of a pleasing myth. Can they prove in the ordinary way in which a historical fact is proved, that this was so. I for one, would be ready to examine all the evidence which they can produce in support of their assertion and would be very glad to accept their conclusions if these are warranted by facts. But beyond pious assertions I have never found even a third rate evidence produced by our Arya friends in support of their proposition.

In the absence of all evidence to the contrary, I am impelled to hold against my wish that Vedic religion was never the religion of mankind or even of any considerable portion of it. In fact, there is no historical evidence that Vedic religion as now inculcated by our Arya friends was ever in its entirety the religion of any portion of mankind whatever.

My Arya friends would come forward and allege that the Vedic religion is older than history, and, therefore, they cannot from the very nature of the case produce any historical evidence in support of their proposition that in ancient times Vedic religion was believed by the whole world.

To this I would humbly submit that it may be so, but what ground there is for us poor folks of the present age, to believe that it was so, nay, I would go further and ask what ground there is for our Arya friends of the present age for believing that it was so.

If the author of the book "The Fountain-Head of Religion" and the people of his sect be pleased to concede that Vedic religion was never a world-wide religion, I would ask them to define its limits at the time when it was at its very zenith, and to tell me, though approximately, the time when it was at its very height.

For ought we know from history we can say that the Vedic religion never travelled beyond the limits of India and never crossed the forbidden seas unless it be in the form of Buddhism which the author of the "Fountain-Head of Religion" labours to prove to have emanated from the Vedic religion, but which proposition the Buddhists would most strenuously deny, and which I too would disprove at a latter stage.

If this be a fact that Vedic religion never travelled beyond the limits of India, how the nations scattered all over the face of the earth received their spiritual consolation. Did

all these nations from the very beginning of creation remain without a spiritual guide and a spiritual religion? Does it conform with the Providence of the Almighty that the benefits of the only Revelation which He has been able to reveal to mankind should benefit one particular people who, ages and centuries ago, confined themselves to the blessed shores of our Peninsula and who from time immemorial have not only refused to impart the knowledge of their holy books to all foreigners, but also to a considerable portion of the people of their own country; and in whose eyes the very touch of all people except that of the three twice-born castes is impure, and who are not allowed to touch the Vedas not to say to read them.

Again, I would ask my Arya friends, what was the state of the Vedic religion at the different periods when the world religions, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam were, vouchsafed to mankind? The reply is partly furnished by our author himself. Our author says: "The period immediately preceding the advent of Budha forms one of the *darkest chapters* in the history of the Vedic religion." Again, about the time of Zoroaster our author writes: "It is probable that when Zoroaster flourished, the pure and monotheistic religion of the Vedas had degenerated into a belief in many gods or devas with Indra, as their king, and that the teaching of Zoroaster was a protest against the polytheistic tendency of the times." It can easily be assumed that at the different epochs of the world when Judaism, Christianity and Islam were reveal to mankind, the Vedic religion was still more in its degraded condition.

This takes us back to a period of 8 or 9 thousand years hence, because Zoroastrianism is about as old as that, according to our author. The inference is plain that during this period of 8 or 9 thousand years at least Vedic religion in its pure form never prevailed in any part of the world even in its place of birth it had degraded into grossest polytheism.

To sum up even if the claim of our friends be accepted that

the Vedic religion inculcates a pure monetheism, the Vedic religion never prevailed in any part of the world except India (at least there is no historical evidence to the contrary), and that even in India it lost its purity and degenerated into gross polytheism (according to the allegation of our author) more than 8 or 9 thousand years ago, and that since then the whole world remained in darkness and ignorance, (for according to our author none of the later religions have been able to teach even passable monotheism.)

I say does it stand to reason or is it conformable with the beneficence and goodness of the Almighty that He should disclose his only revelation to one people, that that revelation should remain confined to one particular country, that centuries ago the language in which this Revelation was disclosed should cease to be the spoken language of the country, and that even in the country of its birth it should degenerate into polytheism, and Deva worship as long ago as the promulgation of Zorastrianism, and the Almighty should take no steps to reveal His will a second time, and at some more central place in the world, and should allow mankind to remain immersed in darkness and ignorance through all these centuries.

The second conclusion which I have pointed out above is also obvious and unavoidable.

Our author and those who think with him hold that all the great religions of the world are based directly or indirectly upon the Vedas. The present book is an attempt to establish this proposition. But such is the perversity of the great founders of these religions that though they draw from one pure fountain they make the water impure in its passage through them. Zoraster, who lived in the earliest antiquity and whose mother tongue was so much allied to the language of the Vedas that the two languages are according to our author, two dialects of one common language or that zind is a direct offshoot of the Sanskrit and in whose time the communication between India and Iran was so close, draws upon Vedas for his inspirations, but does not

fail to degrade the pure doctrines of the Vedas. Similarly, Budha, lived in India among Brahmans and the learned Pandits, and being a Royal Prince had the best sources of learning at his disposal, and the best Sanskrit scholars to teach him; and he being keen about learning must have exhausted all the existing sources of knowledge at least of India. This August personage, though he, according to our author, derives all his moral precepts which are so noble and high from the Vedic religion, unfortunately makes a mistake about God, *i e.*, turns an agnostic according to our author, and this, notwithstanding the fact, that Vedas and all the knowledge that had proceeded from them must have been an open book to him.

Such is the intellectual perversity of these founders of Zorastrianism and Buddhism that though they had the best means of learning the true religion of the Vedas, yet, they established a very poor imitation of it. The founders of Judaism, Christianity and Islam did not possess such direct means to draw upon the Vedas, and therefore their mental weakness in not rising up to the standard of the Vedic religion, is more excusable according to our author.

But what is more objectionable is this: The sources of all these religions were, according to our author, human, and the founders of these religions must have known that the source of their inspiration was human; still none of these great personages had the fairness, and frankness, according to our author, to acknowledge it, and each and every one claimed a Divine Origin for his Religion, and made his followers believe that the said religions were revealed to their founders by direct Divine Revelation. If our author's view be accepted each and every one of the founders of these religions must be convicted of the grossest hypocrisy and dissimulation. Such a morbid, perverse and humiliating view of human nature, both, intellectually and morally, can be acceptable only to these who want to pour new wine into old bottles, and who want to attribute new ideas about God and religion to the Vedas, and who are committed to the theory that if their own religion be true every other religion is false.

CHAPTER II.

In the last chapter I had promised to deal with the book in detail later on. I now hasten to perform my promise, but I don't mean to follow strictly the order of the chapters of the book.

I mean to take up first the chapter dealing with Buddhism.

Our author attempts to establish that Buddhism is based on the Vedic religion. One was to expect some scholarly research in the treatment of such an important subject. Indeed, I had commenced the chapter with very high expectations, but I was doomed to disappointment at least in connection with this chapter.

Before exposing the superficiality of the reasoning of our author, I am going, for argument's sake, to accept the proposition of our author that Buddhism is based on the Vedic religion, and would try to show to what untenable conclusions this assumption leads.

First of all, we must discuss what can be meant by one religion being based upon another. When we say that one book is based upon another, we understand that the chief and most important features of the one are derived from the other. When we say that English Civil law and jurisprudence are based upon Roman Law, we understand that the cardinal principles of the former are derived from the latter. So when it is claimed that Buddhism is based on the Vedic religion, the claim must mean that the main features and the chief principles of Buddhism are derived directly from the Vedic religion.

Now, the Budhistic attitude towards God or, as our author calls it, "the agnosticism of Budha," is, according to our author, foreign to the Vedic religion.

The attitude of a religion towards God and the relationship between the creator and the created is the most important

part of that religious system, and must constitute the more important half of that system. For all the morality and teachings of a religious system must take their colour from the idea of God inculcated by that system. It follows therefore that the most important half of Buddhism has got nothing to do with the Vedic religion. It also follows that the remaining half of Buddhism must correspond exactly and must be derived almost *verbatim* from the Vedas, else we cannot be justified in saying that Buddhism is based on the Vedic religion.

Now, for Budha to derive his moral teachings and the main features of his system (his views about God being always excepted) from the Vedic religion, it was necessary for him to be intimately acquainted with that system, either through an intimate knowledge of the Vedas, Upanishads and other theological learning that had proceeded directly from the Vedas or through the practice of the times. But can it be supposed that Budha learnt all his moral teachings and noble principles from the practice of his age? Certainly not. For I must state for the benefit and information of our author and those of his thinking, that the morals of a people degenerate much earlier than their beliefs. A people continue to remember the dogmas of their religion much later than its moral teachings—and the practice of those teachings of course ceases much earlier. For example, the Buddhists of the present age remember full well the dogmas of their religion, but how many of them practise the moral teachings of Budha. Killing of animals and injury to sentient beings is very strictly forbidden in the Buddhistic system, but Buddhists of the present age eat all kinds of animal food. Similarly, the Christians of the present age believe in all the doctrines about the Divinity of Christ—in the doctrines of incarnation, of Harboodion and Consubstantiation—but how many Christians of the present age act up to the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount or the other sublime precepts of Christ.

So if one were to learn the teachings of Budha and Christ, he cannot learn them from the practice of the Buddhists of the present age, nor from the practice of the Christendom of Europe and America. He must go to the Buddhistic scriptures or the Holy Bible for the purpose. Similar must have been the case in the age of Budha.

“The period immediately preceding the advent of Budha forms one of the darkest chapters in the history of the Vedic religion. Monotheism had degraded into grossest polytheism. The pure and noble religion of the Vedas or Upanishads had degenerated into dead forms, unmeaning rites and cumbersome ceremonies.” These are the words of our author himself. It is clear, therefore, that Budha did not derive his doctrines from the practice of the times. Whence did he derive them, then? From a close study of, and intimate acquaintance with, the Vedas and Upanishads, of course.

All this knowledge and intimate acquaintance with the Vedic learning, however, could not stand Budha in good stead; it could not enable him, according to our author to form even an approximately correct idea about the deity; it could not enable him to deduce that pure and simple monotheism from the Vedas which Swami Dayanand Saraswati could so easily deduce from the same source more than twenty centuries afterwards, and which our author finds absolutely no difficulty in ascribing to the Vedas.

According to our author, the difference between the mental calibre of Goutam Budha and the Swami is plain, and I will leave it to my readers to decide whether they can subscribe to the view of our author or not. But I can suggest a more reasonable explanation for these different deductions,—an explanation which would be more acceptable to every judicious mind, warranted as it is by facts. Budha lived at a time when Indian mind was quite uninfluenced by outside thought. His environments were altogether Indian. In justification of his views Budha could not appeal to anything but Indian opinion.

We have seen that on our author's own hypothesis, it is necessary to presume, that Budha was intimately acquainted with the Vedas and with all the Vedic learning. He found in the Vedas noble philosophic truths and, side by side with these, he found therein Deva worship, the caste system and the like. He could not honestly make the passages relating to God and the passages relating to the worship of Devas, such as Indra, Agni and the like, conform with one another. Notwithstanding his intimate knowledge of the Vedas, he could not so interpret the passages which refer to Indra, Agni and other deities, as to make Indra and Agni mean mere attributes and not specific entities. I say he could not do this according to the canons of honest interpretation, and therefore he refrained from doing it. But in the time in which he lived, even if he had attempted this sort of interpretation, he must have failed, because there was no extraneous atmosphere of thought, no intelligent opinion to support him.

If he had made his stand on the Vedas and had said that Indra and Agni, in the passages in which sentiments of worship are ascribed to them, do not mean specific gods and deities, but mere attributes of the Almighty, the learned Pandits of the time equally well versed in the Vedas with him, would have flung the original passages from the Vedas and interpretations of the same accumulated in the course of centuries, in his face and he would have had no authority or public opinion to support his own interpretations.

If the Shankia philosopher in his war against caste and in his genuine attempts to do away with the pernicious caste system had relied upon the authority of the Vedas and had said that caste system in the Vedas merely meant the system of the division of labour, the learned of the time would have laughed down the idea and would have put forward, to refute him, the famous passage of the Vedas: "The Brahmans are his (*i. e.*, of mankind personified) head, the Kshatriyas are his arms,

the Vaysas are his thighs and Sudras are his feet," and no sane man of the time could have by any stretch of imagination thought with Budha that this passage was merely equivalent to the doctrine of the division of labour.

The above is the interpretation of the Aryas; the Vedic passage about caste is quite differently interpreted by the orthodox Hindoos, but even according to the interpretation of our Arya friends, the passage certainly does not mean the system of the division of labour.

Budha preached the lesson of "Jiwan Par Daya." He did not make any distinction between the different orders of the lower creatures. In his eyes a monkey, a deer, a dog and a cat were equally deserving of pity with a cow and a bullock. If he had said that he had derived this doctrine of his from the Vedas, no one would have listened to him; and how could they? He was putting "Gow Mata"—an animal more revered even than ordinary men, certainly above Sudras in the scale of creation—on the same level with all the other animal creation. Could there be any greater sacrilege than that? For these reasons he could not build his system upon the Vedas and was compelled to break away, and did actually break away, from the Vedas, as the broad facts of history writ large and in bold and bloody character upon the soil of India do amply testify.

When Swami Dayanand Saraswati lived, the whole atmosphere of Indian thought had changed. New ideas and new beliefs had taken permanent root on the Indian soil and the indigenous thought could not help being affected by these new and current ideas.

Islam with its uncompromising monotheism, undivided devotion to the Deity and with its doctrine of universal brotherhood of man had been in India for about one thousand years.

The very fact of the incoming of Islam into India and the establishment of Mohammedan kingdoms must have been the

source of a great awakening and intellectual advancement to every intelligent Indian mind.

When the Mohammedan warriors first poured into India, the Indian valour stood up to meet them. The Indian warriors prayed at their most sacred temples and invoked the aid of their most beneficent, familiar and homely deities against these foreign intruders. Their deities were unable to protect them, their lands and properties against the inroad of these new opponents. The Indian warriors succumbed one after another against these their new enemies. The deities who were believed to afford protection in wars and other calamities were found unable to protect their votaries. This must have to a great extent shaken the belief in the powers of these deities.

Before all this had happened, if any one were so daring as to doubt for a moment the powers of the commonly accepted deities, he would be at once branded as a heretic and a senseless scuffer. But now the tables were turned. The votaries and the priests must have found it difficult to frame arguments to maintain the belief of the people in their gods.

When the Mohammedans were established in India a stream of literature, Arabic, Persian and Urdu, flowed into the land of Rishies and Munies. A multitude of Indians took to Persian and Urdu literature and some of them became as proficient in these languages as Mohammedans themselves. The literature of a people is the mirror of the ideas of that people. The literature of Mohammedans could not but be imbued with the monotheistic ideas of that people. The Hindoos who read and gloried in that literature could not but be impressed by the monotheistic spirit that pervaded that literature. The intelligent portion of the Indian population learnt new ideas and new beliefs. Many left the old fold and joined the new. A great many more, though too conservative to break away entirely from the past, became unconscious converts to the new ideas.

At this juncture, Christianity imbued with Lutherianism, appeared on the scene with its theories of free thought and free discussion; with its doctrines of liberty, freedom and fraternity. It opened a new vista for Indian thought. According to it, authority should not be respected unless it deserved to be respected. Milton, Mill and Herbert Spencer had their converts. The whole Indian thought was revolutionised. The dull minds, from apathy or from habit, continued to move in the old grooves and to follow the practices of their forefathers.

The intelligent minds, however, ceased to believe in what they had learnt during their infancy. An intense conservatism and a tenacious love for their old, old antiquity were the only reasons why they did not break away altogether from the past. Any interpretations of their sacred books, however farfetched these may be, that would bring these books into line with the ideas which they had come to believe most heartily, would be only too acceptable to them. Swami Dayananda Saraswati offered such interpretation and therefore his voice was listened to. It is Christianity and Islam therefore and the environment of thought created by these that made our Swami's mission a possibility.

But this is not all. It is to Christianity and Islam that the learned Swami owed his own awakening. He could not have attributed to the Vedas the ideas which he has done, had it not been for the changed environments. Had it not been for these, he would have ended by originating a new system like Gowtama Buddha. Like Kabir Das and Guru Nanak, Raj Ram Mohan Rai and Keshab Chander Sen, the learned Swami had become a convert to the ideas and beliefs that prevailed all about him, before he began to interpret the Vedas according to the spirit that had pervaded the Indian thought. But gratitude does not seem to be one of the ingredients of our Swami's nature. Instead of being thankful to Christianity and Islam to which he owed so much and which had made his mission a possibility, he turns one of chief detractors both of Christianity and Islam.

From what I have said above, I think it has become sufficiently clear why the deductions of the Swami were so different from those of Goutama Budha, which were based on the assumption that Budha had derived his doctrines from the same source as the Swami, though this is by no means the case.

In the next chapter I will show how far our author has succeeded in proving that Buddhism is derived from the Vedic religion.

CHAPTER III.

"IS BUDDHISM BASED ON THE VEDIC RELIGION."

THE reasoning of our author on this head is curious; indeed, there is no reasoning at all as far as this subject is concerned.

He recapitulates briefly the state of Hinduism at the time of the advent of Budha and then concludes that Buddhism is founded on the Vedic religion. Our author lays down the following premises:—

- (1) "The period immediately preceding the advent of Budha forms one of the darkest chapters in the history of the Vedic Religion."
- (2) "Being sceptical about the Deity, Buddha could not possibly believe in a Divine Revelation. His attitude towards the Vedas, however was not one of *hostility* but of indifference, and his indifference was due partly to his *ignorance* of the Vedas and partly to the belief of the age that the Vedas sanctioned slaughter of animals and distinction of castes as then prevalent. Had he been well-versed in the Vedas, he would have become like Swami Dayanand Saraswati, a Vedic Reformer, instead of being the apostle of a new faith."

These are the premises of our author, yet wonderfully enough his conclusion is "that Buddhism *sprang up directly* from the Vedic Religion."

A piece of more illogical logic, a specimen of more inconsistent and self-contradictory reasoning is not easy to conceive.

When the practice of the times of Buddha was so opposed to the spirit of the Vedic Religion, when Buddha was so ignorant of the Vedas that he founded a new system, how that system directly sprang up from the Vedas is more than a normally constituted mind can imagine.

Besides, in the first sentence of his 2nd premise our author is guilty of strange confusion of ideas. He says: "Being sceptical about the Deity, Buddha could not possibly believe in a Divine Revelation."

Here our author mistakes, the result of Buddha's enquiry for its very commencement and then bases his reasoning on this mistaken assumption.

The point is whether this scepticism of Buddha about the Deity (if he was really a sceptic) was the commencement or the result of his religious inquiry, whether he was a sceptic before he commenced his inquiries into the problems of life or as a result of such inquiries. The latter was certainly the case. No one undertakes the task of solving the mysteries of the universe, having first renounced his belief in God, much less could this have been the case in an Indian Prince who was surrounded on all sides by people believing not only in God but a thousand other deities. The atmosphere of thought that surrounded Buddha was too religious to make him a sceptic from the very outset.

This being so, there was no reason why Buddha should have been opposed to Divine Revelation or should have shunned the Vedas from the very outset.

Again, Buddha's attitude towards caste and his doctrines of love and sympathy towards the sentient beings are the result of his inquiries and not the beginning, and thereof there is no reason why he should have become indifferent to the Vedas, simply because Vedas sanctioned caste system or the slaughter of animals; as a matter of common experience, every body who starts on an enquiry regarding any subject, first exhausts all the existing sources of knowledge on the subject and if these sources do not satisfy him, he takes up the enquiry independently of them.

In the days of Buddha, Vedas were thought to be the repository of all knowledge both religious and secular at least in India and from his early education and environments, he must have become familiar with the character of the Vedas; and when the problems of life and death and all the sorrows and miseries that human nature is heir to first presented themselves for solution to Buddha, he must naturally have resorted to the Vedas and Upanishads for the solution of these ever-present problems; and when the Vedas, because they sanctioned Deva-worship, caste system and the like, could not satisfy the yearnings of his soul, he started on an independent enquiry

This is not an imaginary picture drawn by me; read the life of Buddha and you will find full confirmation of it.

We read in the life of Buddha, "Gradually Kumar began to get strong and his education was commenced at the proper time. Naturally, he was of a serious disposition and the fickleness that is usually to be found in children was not to be seen in him. He did not take delight in play like other children. For this reason he acquired efficiency in Learning in a very short time."

Again, "Siddhartha (the original name of Buddha) having left the loving embraces of his beloved wife Gopa and having relinquished the ease and luxury of a Palace and the attractions of a Kingdom, spent seven days in a mango jungle named *Unupari* by the side of the Umma river. He was very much satisfied in his mind that he had been enabled to cut and sever the worldly ties and was now able to devote his mind and soul to acquire insight into the *summum bonum* of this life. After 7 days he left the Unupari Jungle and moved towards the South-East. On the way he was the guest of Shaki Paduna and Brahma Rishis, who showed great hospitality and love towards this new Sanyasi. Gradually Siddhartha reached the city of Baishali, (General Cuningham says that 140 miles to the North-East of Baraisi there was a city of Baishali at a

place called Baishar. This place is to the North of the present Patna). There he became the disciple of a very learned Pandit and Salyasi named Arar Kalam, who was staying there with 300 pupils. Arar was wonder struck at seeing the unparalleled beauty of Siddhartha and with great veneration gave Siddhartha a place in his *Ashram*. Siddhartha began to take lessons in Darshan Shashtra and Dhyan from this great Rishi. In a short time Siddhartha mastered all that this great teacher had to teach; but he could get no clue to that for which he had left the world, and therefore he left the *Ashram* of Arar Rishi. He then became the pupil of Ramputra Rudrak Rishi, who lived with 700 pupils in a cave and ere long became equal in learning to his teacher. Siddhartha learnt from Arar and Rudrak Rishis Hindu Shastras, but he was not satisfied with their teachings. He found that Arar and Rudrak Rishis had raised themselves above worldly desires, but the germs of those desires were still present in their minds. If the very root of sin is not uprooted, how can one possibly be safe from falling a victim to it. Siddhartha determined to raise his body and mind to such a state that the very desire and thought of sin should become an impossibility."

"It is clear from the above that Buddha must have acquired all the Sanskrit Learning that these Rishis and great Sanskrit Scholars had to teach.

Surely they did not teach him Greek or Latin or anything else. If they taught him anything, it was the Vedas, and all the learning that had proceeded from them.

In the 2nd chapter of his book dealing with the thesis that "Christianity is based chiefly on Judaism and partly on Buddhism," our author has quoted a number of moral precepts from the Holy Bible and the Buddhistic Scriptures which indeed bear a degree of resemblance with one another.

He has also been able to point out certain instances of similarity between some of the monastic forms and ceremonies of Christianity and Buddhism:—

How according to Dr. Fergusson the Buddhistic cave temple of Kariie resembles to a great extent an early Christian Church in its arrangement, in its parts and the divisions of its building.

How a Roman Catholic Missionary Abbe Huc was much struck by what he saw in Tibet so that he expressed his astonishment in the following words:

“The crozier, the mitre the dalmatic, the cope or pluvial which the Grand Lamas wear on a journey or when they part or in some ceremony outside the temple, the service with a double choir, psalmody, exorcisms, the censer swinging on five chains contrived to be opened or shut at will, the Benediction by the Lamas with the right hand extended over the heads of the faithful, the chaplet, sacerdotal celibacy, leuten retirements from the world, worship of saints, fasts, processions, litanies, holy water:—these are the points of contact between Buddhists and ourselves.”

In view of these points of resemblance if the Buddhists were to put forward the claim that their religion has to certain extent influenced Christianity, at least in its outward form and ceremonies, the claim might be worthy of consideration and might well deserve examination at the hands of seekers after truth, though to men who believe in the Divine origin of religions, such claims mean very little.

Buddhism was founded in India and taught and preached in the native tongue of Buddha. Christianity took its birth in Syria and Palestine. The places of the birth of Christianity and Buddhism were thousands of miles apart, the means of communication were so few and so difficult, the languages in which the two religions were taught were so different from each other that there is no similarity of origin between the two. If, with so many grounds of difference between Christianity and Buddhism, so many points of similarity can be pointed out between the two religions, how much the greater and more intimate must be the similarity between Buddhism and the Vedic religion, seeing that Buddhism took its birth and flourished in Arya-Varta, the home of the Vedic religion, and seeing that the

language in which Buddha taught was so much and so closely allied to Sanskrit. Again, how much greater must be the similarity seeing that it is claimed that Buddhism sprang up directly from the Vedic religion, while for Christianity it is urged that it is based only in part upon Buddhism. Under these circumstances it was to be expected that Buddhistic Scriptures would be as it were a mere copy or a paraphrase of the Vedas, that Buddhistic forms and ceremonies would be a mere imitation of the Vedic rites and that the Buddhistic shrines, sacred places, and places of worship would be a mere facsimile of the Hindu temples.

But how different are the actual facts. Our author in his chapter on Buddhism notwithstanding his great learning and research, has not been able to quote any parallel passages from the Buddhistic Scriptures and the Vedas, has not been able to point out any similarity between the Buddhistic rites and ceremonies with those practised by the followers of the Vedic religion, has not been able to give any examples of similarity in architecture between Buddhistic places of worship and the Hindu temples; and wherever our author has attempted such a comparison he has utterly failed.

The four cardinal truths of Buddha as quoted by our author are: (I) that life is suffering, (II) that the cause of suffering is thirst or desire, (III) that the extinction of thirst leads to cessation of suffering and (IV) that this extinction of thirst can be achieved by the eight-fold path, *i. e.*, practise of (1) right belief, (2) right aspiration, (3) right speech, (4) right conduct, (5) right means of livelihood, (6) right exertion, (7) right mindfulness, and (8) right meditation.

Our author derives the above from the following aphorism of Nyaya Sutras:—'Of suffering, attachment evil motive and false knowledge, the extinction of one leads to that which precedes it, and the extinction of suffering is the *summum bonum* or emancipation.'

I will leave it to my readers to decide whether they can derive the four cardinal truths of Buddha from the above aphorism of Nyaya Sutra, which, though rendered in plain English, conveys very little meaning.

As a last resort, our author has been compelled to allege that the commandments of Buddha not to kill, not steal, not to speak falsehood, not to commit adultery are derived from similar commandments in the Vedic religion.

I am really astonished at the simplicity of the reasoning of our author; as if the human mind is so barren that the founder of a great religion like Buddhism could not discover for himself the homely truths that murder, theft, adultery and drunkenness were moral evils, unless he found them recorded on some paper or in some book, as if in the countries which had never heard of the Vedas and the Vedic religion, murder, theft and adultery were regarded as virtues and not as crimes and as if any one can really learn a truth by merely reading it in some book unless he realises it and that most forcibly within himself. It is obvious that society even in its crudest form cannot exist without the knowledge and practice of these truths.

It is the self-realization of truths that makes those truths one's own.

Every one can talk that theft, murder and adultery are signs of moral depravity, but the talk of how many can have any effect upon their listeners.

It is only those who realize these truths within themselves and who for themselves have discovered that these are moral evils, that they can communicate these truths to others by means of the spiritual fire that is within them and can thus raise and reform society.

If our author were to read his own chapters on Buddhism and Christianity impartially and were to ponder over the fact

that he has not been able to discover as many points of similarity between Buddhism and the Vedic religion, as he has been able to point out between Buddhism and Christianity, and that even such points of similarity are wanting in Buddhism and the Vedic religion as ought to have arisen accidentally, the two religions having lived and flourished on the same soil, he would have been naturally led to the conclusion that Buddhism has got nothing to do with the Vedic religion, but is on the contrary opposed to it.

But an impartial survey of facts is not in the line of our Arya friends.

That won't serve their purpose, that won't fit in with their pre-conceived ideas. They have committed themselves to a narrow, untenable and uncharitable theory that their own religion is the one God-sent religion, and that no other religion of the world is so—a theory for which there is no sanction in the Vedas themselves.

I challenge any one to quote any passage from the Vedas or Upanishads in support of this most preposterous theory, nay, I challenge him even to prove inferentially from the Vedas that God revealed his 'will' to the Rishis and Munis of the Vedic times and that he won't do so again till the end of the world.

The Rishis and Munis of old were, I believe, too broadminded to give countenance to such unreasonable, untenable and narrow theories which bring human nature and human understanding into discredit, and which make one question and question rightly even the goodness and beneficence of the Almighty.

I give below some of the points not only of dissimilarity, but of opposition between Buddhism and the Vedanta :—

(1) Under the Vedanta system, the ego is highly developed, the self is highly important, so much so that it embraces

the universe and endeavours to become one with it. It occasionally rises to the height of the Deity itself. Vedantism lays down, *all is God* and *all is I*, so that there is no distinction of *ma am* and *To am*, I and you—I do not know how many of our Arya friends have risen to these philosophic heights of Vedantism and whether these philosophic theories form part of their creed or not—and fine morality can be derived from these basic principles.

In Buddhism, on the other hand, self-renunciation is the order of the day.

Buddhism says, *All is not I* and, so stands diametrically opposed to Vedanta.

In spite of the tenderest care for the self all actual egotism is done away with in Buddhism, because all possibility of egotism is banished and the morality of Buddhism is based on this self-effacement. If *All is not I*, if I am nothing, I can have no reason to resent, if you cause me an injury or do me a wrong—in fact, there is no possibility of your doing me a wrong, because I am nothing. Similarly you can possibly have no motive to do me a wrong, because one causes an injury or does a wrong to another in order that he should gain some pleasure or benefit for himself, in order that his own ego should be satisfied—but when the ego itself is done away with, there can possibly be no desire for the satisfaction of that ego.

(2) The Vedic religion and all Indian thought attribute to human souls and for the matter of that to all sentient beings, “a Being without a becoming, an Individuality without change.” “According to Buddhism, on the other hand, there is no being, there is only a becoming.”

(3) Wedlock is a sacred thing in Brahmanism *Grihasth Ashram* is a sacred duty under the Hindu system. One could only take exclusively to religious meditation after he had served his term as a husband and a father.

Buddha did not recognise the sacredness of the marital ties; nor did he recognise it as a sacred duty in an individual that he should serve his term as a house-holder before he betook himself exclusively to religious meditation. If religious life, the life of a Bhikshu is a good thing, any one could take to it at any stage of his life; and if the desire were there any one could tear asunder at any time the family ties and could join the religious order

(4) Under Buddhism women can take to religious orders, can perform religious ceremonies for themselves and can learn and teach the Buddhistic scriptures. Under the Vedic system religion must be learnt and taught by the sterner sex only, and among these too, by one caste only, *i. e.*, the Brahmans.

(5) Buddhism tore asunder the bonds of caste which Brahmanism and the Vedic religion had so firmly established and had so deeply ingrained in the Indian nature, that even to-day it will require Herculean strength to root it out.

Our Arya friends would come forward and illogically assert that the Vedic religion did not sanction caste system.

BUT FACTS ARE FACTS.

Look on the whole face of the Earth in all climes and ages, let all the people of the world ancient and modern pass before your minds eye, as it were, in a panoroma do you find any where and at any time during the history of the world any thing like the Indian caste system with all its unrelenting rigour and unquestioned authority any where and among any people.

If it were natural with man to divide themselves into groups each unpenetrable to the other socially and morally any number of instances would have been found of such divisions into groups and castes.

But history points to none.

Indian caste system is unique in itself without a parallel.

Any philosophic investigator would in inevitably conclude from these phenomena even though no direct passages in the Vedas and other Hindoo religious books were forth-coming which ordained caste system, that the peculiar caste system of India was the direct outcome of the Vedic religion.

How much more his conclusions would be strengthened if he discovered specific passages in the Vedas permanently establishing the Caste system.

Many more points of opposition between Buddhism and the Vedic religion can be easily pointed out, but this article would scarcely admit of these.

From what has been said above, it will be apparent to every candid reader that Buddhism is not only not based on the Vedic religion, but is on the contrary opposed to it in its most fundamental principles. This is what Dr. Dahlke has to say on the inter-relation of Buddhism and the Vedic religion:—

“Some people represent Buddhism as an offshoot of Brahmanism—as to a certain extent a continuation, a spirit realization of the same—but the connection between them is one that is purely external.” Everything in the world must have some foundation upon which it stands, but Buddha took his stand upon Brahmanism only as a man with an axe upon the tree which he is to fell.

“As regards its inner nature, Buddhism is as utterly opposed to Brahmanism even to the most spiritualised form of the same—Vedanta—as day is to night, though these latter also arise one out of the other.”

In the next chapter I would deal with the different effects which Buddhism and the Vedic religion have produced upon the people who have adopted these religions

CHAPTER IV. BUDDHISM.

IN this article I mean to deal with the effects of Buddhism and the Vedic religion on their respective followers and that mainly from a political point of view.

Now-a-days it is a fashion to relegate religion to the limbo, to the domain of things that are remnants of an exploded past, It is not now considered as a thing of sufficient weight to affect our serious avocations of life.

But history points to a different conclusion. Religious movements have changed the very face of the earth and have proved the most important factors in the progress and development of nations. Religion has got the power to transform the most insignificant and backward people as if by a magic wand into the most powerful and progressive nations in an incredibly short time.

One important thing about religion is its catholicity and this is a chief feature of every true religion. All who come under its banner are brothers and possess equal rights and privileges.

All civilizations that are founded not on the foundation of religion lack this catholicity of spirit.

No true religion makes the distinction of Greeks and helots, of Romans and barbarians, as all civilizations devoid of religion do.

Roman and Greek civilizations of old are cases in point.

In the European countries and in America, Christianity is at present the prevailing religion. The people of these countries are either Roman Catholics or Protestants.

The Protestant countries like Germany, England and America, make for development and progress in all the branches of human greatness, economic, social and political. The Roman

Catholic countries like Italy, Spain and Russia, on the other hand, are either stationary or retrogressive. This shows that even now religious opinion is not without its effects upon the people who follow it. We see a similar distinction between the effects of Buddhism and the Vedic religion.

To whatever state of eminence and political greatness the followers of the Vedic religion might have arisen in the pre-historic times of Ram Chandra and Sri Krishna, Buddhism has always had the upper hand since the advent of Buddha.

At the time when Buddha lived and in the period immediately preceding the birth of Buddha, there were no great and powerful empires in India. It is true that in the time of Buddha there were powerful kingdoms of Magadh and Kosala just on the borders of the principality of Kapilavastu where Buddha was born. But these kingdoms were of local fame. There were no empires of world-wide reknown, *e. g.*, there were no empires in India of such power and greatness as the contemporary Sassanide Empire which was just coming to an end, or the Roman Empire which was just taking its rise.

In short, at the time of the advent of Buddha, India was not politically great, India was not counted in the councils of nations.

Within a hundred years of the time when Buddha's mission was preached to the world, India rose in splendour, in magnificence, in political importance and greatness, *i. e.*, it grew to be a very powerful pawn on the political chess-board of the world. Powerful empires of world-wide greatness sprang up on the soil of India.

Asoka the Great ruled a powerful kingdom in Northern India. His sovereign sway extended from Assam in the east to the banks of Indus in the west. He made monasteries or *dagobas*, laid out gardens and constructed hospitals for men and beasts, and published edicts throughout the empire.

These edicts are even to-day discovered in different parts of India, engraven on pillars and rocks whose wide distance from one another is sufficient to show the great extent of Asoka's empire.

Rhys David says: "The pillars are at Delhi and Allahabad: the rocks at Kapada Girie near Peshawar, at Girnar in Gujerat, at Dhauli in Orissa and at Bobra on the road running from Delhi to Jaipur." His agents and missionaries went as far as Ceylon.

Asoka's own son Mahendra went to Ceylon as a missionary and converted Tissa the king of the place into the religion of the great Buddha.

Such was the spirit of adventure and zeal infused by Buddhism into the Indian life that when the queen and the female relations of the King of Ceylon expressed a wish to be converted to Buddhism, Mahendra at once sent word to Magadha, in consequence of which his own sister Sangamitra, the daughter of Asoka the great, who was already a Buddhist nun, started for Ceylon along with a band of nuns.

Within less than a hundred years from the death of Buddha, Buddhism had divided itself into two main branches—the northern Buddhism and the southern Buddhism; the doctrines of the former were called Mahayana or the great path and these of the latter Hinayana or lower path.

In the beginning of the Christian era the Northern Buddhism spread beyond the borders of India, for at that time a great king arose in north-western India as Asoka was before him in Eastern India.

This King was the celebrated Kanishka of Kashmir. He was a zealous Buddhist. He helped the cause of Buddhism with great zeal. He sent missionaries to China, Mongolia and Tibet.

“Kanishka’s dominion extended from Kabul to the Hindu Kush, over Yarkand and Khokband; throughout Kashmir, Ladakha and the central Himalayas, down over the plains of the upper Ganges and Jumna as far as Agra, over Rajputana, Gujerat and Sindh, and thus the whole of the Punjab.” (See Rhys David’s Buddhism, pages 238-239).

India cannot point out within historic times to any indigenous kings who surpassed or even equalled in glory or greatness the Buddhist Kings, namely, Asoka or Kanishka, nor can it point out that under the rulers of its own kith and kin India was politically as great as it was under Asoka or Kanishka (this is of course by leaving the pre-historic times out of account) unless it be the famous Vikramaditya with whose name the Samvat era commencing in the year 57 B. C. is connected.

But this Vikramaditya is no fixed historical personality. Dr. Hunter says: “This prince is popularly identified with the King of Ujjain, who gave his name to the Samvat era commencing in the year 57 B. C. But, as Holdzman points out, it will be almost as dangerous to infer from this latter circumstance that Vikramaditya lived in 57 B. C. as to place Julius Cæsar in the first year of the so-called Julian calendar, *i. e.*, 2713 B. C. Several Vikramadityas figure in Indian History. Indeed, the name is merely a title ‘a very sun in prowess’ which has been borne by victorious monarchs of many of the Indian dynasties. The date of Vikramaditya has been variously assigned from 57 B. C. to 1050 A. D.; and the works of the poets and philosophers who formed the ‘Nine gems’ of his court, appear from internal evidence to have been composed at intervals during that long period. The Vikramaditya under whom Kalidas and the ‘Nine Gems’ are traditionally said to have flourished ruled over Malwa probably, about 500 to 550 A. D.”

Buddhism had infused new life and new vitality into India and under its rejuvenating influence India rose in glory and magnificence. India became great—India was respected and

feared—its neighbours dared not lightly interfere with it, dared not carelessly trample upon its rights and privileges.

But the Vedic religion and its chief exponents, the Brahmans, were not pleased with all this and how could they? Buddhism had, as it were, dethroned the Brahmans from their Olympic heights. This was the greatest sin of Buddhism—a sin too heinous to be forgiven—an injury that must be revenged sooner or later. As time went on the opportunity for revenge presented itself.

Gradually the spirit of zeal and discipline became feeble in the Buddhistic monks and religious orders. The privileges that were accorded to these orders on the understanding that they would be entitled to them only as long as they kept the sincerity of purpose of their great guide in view began to be abused. The Buddhistic monasteries that were meant for the pure, the simple and the truthful, began to be the resort of the idlers and the vain.

In the beginning only those would take to the life of a Bhikshu who felt the inward call and in whose eyes no attractions were left in the worldly possessions ; now all those who did not feel equal to the struggle of actual life would take to the religious order and resort to these monasteries to spend a life of ease and opulence.

These Buddhists were no longer a match for the more astute, more intellectual Brahmans. Hinduism found its opportunity. The Vedic religion, the broad and the all-embracing Vedic religion of the orthodox Hindoos, and not the dogmatic Vedic religion as understood by our Arya friends, incorporated within itself some of the distinctive points of Buddhism such as (Jivan Par Daya) that specially appealed to it for acceptance and gradually began to gain ground over Buddhism. Buddhism began to give way at every point. At this time a great and powerful personage arose among the Brahmans in the person of the celebrated Shankaracharya.

Before this great and powerful personality Buddhism had no refuge. To his trenchant and powerful logic Buddhism of the times had no answer to make. The result was that Buddhism was banished altogether from the soil of India. But this complete and most decisive victory was not for India's good.

It was to be supposed that the new spirit of enthusiasm and reaction which had enabled the Vedic religion to drive Buddhism bag and baggage from the soil of India would infuse new life into Indian polity which would enable India to rise far above the height which it had attained under Buddhism. But nothing of the sort did happen. India did not produce any new Asoka or Kanishka nor even a sovereign like Chandragupta. India again fell politically. It divided itself into petty principalities and chieftainships.

From the fall of Buddhism till the advent of Islam, Indian history is meagre and barren. During this period there are no great deeds worth recording about its heroes and heroines as far as the political aspect of the question is concerned.

Vedic religion had succeeded in killing the freshness and life which was given to India by Buddhism but could not infuse any vitality of its own into Indian life. The banished Buddhism took refuge in China and Japan and by its inherent force conferred greatness on these countries.

China has, up to now, held its own against the world. Notwithstanding occasional periods of subservience and decay, China never lost its individuality for any considerable period. Japan has not only held its own, but in very recent years asserted its power and greatness in quite a unique fashion and has astonished the world by its wonderful achievements both in peace and war.

The recovery of India to the Vedic religion did not bring any similar greatness to India.

After the banishment of Buddhism from the soil of India, India had again to wait for several centuries for the advent of Islam before it could acquire any political greatness.

When Islam came into India about the 10th or 11th century A. D., and brought with it fresh and new ideas about God and the universe and inspired the Indian life with its all-pervading spiritual fire, India took a new lease of life and became great socially, morally and politically (our object here is to deal with the political side of the question only).

During the Muhammedan period, India produced not one, not two but any number of Asokas and Kanishkas. The great emperors of Slave, Pathan and Mughal dynasties were inferior to none of their contemporaries in the world.

A Shahab-ud-din Ghorî, an Ala-ud-din Khiljî, a Ghias-ud-din Balban, a Shams-ud-din Altamash, a Sher Shah Sur, an Akbar, a Shahjahan, and an Aurangzeb, were inferior to none of their contemporaries of the world in magnificence and splendour, in power and prestige.

Embassies from Europe, China and Persia waited at the courts of some of these Indian Emperors. Indian armies headed by Indian Generals and Rajput Princes fought at Kabul and Qandhar and in some instances Rajput princes governed provinces beyond the Indian border. All these Muhammedan Rulers were Indian Kings in the truest sense of the word.

I call them Indian Kings, because most of them were born and bred in India, several of them had Indian ladies for their mothers. It was the good will, the attachment and loyalty of the Indian people which made the Muhammadan rule in India a possibility specially when most of these Indian Kings were cut off from their bases beyond the border of India, and consequently they had to depend for their safety and for the safety of their followers on local resources. This attachment and loyalty must

have been due to either of the two following causes and probably to both.

The Indian warriors and soldiers had learnt by experience in many a hard-fought and hotly-contested field that the newcomers were more than a match for them in a field of battle. The Indian population—the peasant and the handicraftsman—had, on the other hand, learnt that their new rulers were better and more considerate masters than their indigenous Kings. The people must have learnt by experience that more amity and peace, more kind and just treatment was to be had under the new rulers than under the old ones. This must have been a most important factor in the establishment and continuance of the Muhammadan rule in India. If this latter factor were wanting, it would have been impossible for Muhammadan predominance to continue in India for seven centuries or more. To hold otherwise is to do the greatest injustice to Indian character, to Indian valour and to Indian sense of self-respect.

After seven centuries of predominance in India the Muhammadans lost their power and vigour, their spirit of adventure and self-sacrifice, their spirit of sacrificing their ease and comfort for a noble idea. They began to prefer the luxuries of home and hearth, of palace and harem, to the hard-ships of the field and camp. The spirit of self-indulgence increased and that of self-sacrifice waned.

As a natural result, the Muhammadans went down as they deserved to do and the purport of the Holy Text

ان الله لا يغير ما بقوم حتى يغيروا ما بانفسهم

was fulfilled. In the beginning of the 18th century after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Mughal empire was hastening to its ruin. The central authority was weak and ineffective, and the empire was in the process of rapid disintegration. Province after province declared itself to be independent of the central authority. From the death of Aurangzeb till the beginning of the 19th century when the British entered upon an active

career of conquest which led to Mahratta wars the Vedic religion and the Indian people had full one century to build up their destiny for ill or good. But no Asoka or Kanishka rose among the Hindus and no Akbar or Aurangzeb among the Muhammadans. The Mahratta confederacy had attained some power and importance, but they did neither possess military genius of a very high order nor any capacity to govern and rule people.

They could not supply the country with the one crying need of the times, a settled and organised Government. Their methods were hasty inroads into other peoples' lands, a levy of chowth from them and then a retreat to their headquarters.

Even in the field of battle the Mahrattas did not disclose any great qualities of a soldier or a general. In the one battle which they fought against the somewhat organised forces of Muhammadans of upper India backed up by 25,000 Afghans under Ahmad Shah, they got hopelessly beaten.

Nor their powerful confederacy won any laurels in their battles against the English. The victories of Assaye and Argaum in the south and those of Aligarh and Laswari in the north were easily-won victories for the British. Indeed, the British had to do more real fighting at the end of the 18th century with Haider Ali and Tipoo Sultan of Mysore and really hard fighting with the Sikhs between 1845 and 1849.

At Chilianwala the Sikhs actually defeated the British forces under Gough. But Mahrattas never showed any such good fighting qualities. In short, the people of India during one full century could not give peace and prosperity to the unhappy land. Both Hindoos and Muhammadans were weighed in the balance for full one hundred years and were found wanting. The wise Providence then gave the country to a handful of people from beyond the seas, who could give the country peace and a settled Government which it most needed.

In our own days under the wide-spread influence of Western thought and culture orthodox Hinduism has produced such leaders of thought and intellectual giants as the late R. C. Dutt, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and many others ; but from the ranks of our Arya friends who claim to be interpreters of the truest spirit of the Vedas and who claim to be the followers of the Vedic religion in its truest sense no leader of public thought has yet arisen whether it be in literature, in politics, in art or in science.

The reason of this difference is not far to seek. A sort of conservatism, a sort of reaction has already set in among our Arya friends, They do not approach the Western Science and Western learning with that freedom of mind, with that breadth of outlook with which it is approached by the generality of our Hindu brethren.

It is a strange phenomena of modern Hinduism that the orthodox Hindoos, though they are in outward forms and ceremonies, in questions of touch and the like, very conservative and reluctant to adopt any change, in the realm of thought they are as free and broad-minded as any body. The reverse is the case with our Arya friends.

This conservatism of our Arya friends in the domain of thought has found expression in such institutions as the Gurnu Kul at Hardwar. Another feature peculiar to our Arya friends is their egoism, their attitude of self-sufficiency in the domain of thought. They think that in the domain of religion and philosophy, they have got nothing to learn from any body else and their chief attempt and mission is to bring about the same attitude of mind in the rest of the Hindu population. Their arrogance and self-sufficiency in this connection and the over repetition of this attitude in season and out of season often becomes nauseating.

The book under review, " The Fountain Head of Religion," is an apt illustration of this attitude.

But I am wandering from my subject. The object of this article was to discuss the different effects of Buddhism and the Vedic religion upon the people who follow them respectively.

From what has been said above I think it has become sufficiently clear how different are the effects of Buddhism from those of the Vedic Religion upon the people who follow these religions. In my last article I had established that Buddhism was not only not based upon the Vedic religion, but was opposed to it in its most fundamental principles.

Buddhism therefore is not only opposed to Vedic religion in its most vital principles ; but its effects upon the people who follow it are so different from the effects of the Vedic religion. Buddhism therefore has got absolutely nothing to do with the Vedic religion.

One link in the chain of our author's reasoning namely, that "Buddhism is based on the Vedic religion" is therefore hopelessly broken. In fact, no such link ever existed. Our author had reared up a make-believe link and the true character of this link has been fully demonstrated.

When it is shown that Buddhism has got no connection whatever with the Vedic religion, it is not necessary to deal in detail with that part of Chapter II of the "Fountain-head of religion" which attempts to establish the proposition that Christianity is based in part on Buddhism.

But it may be remarked here briefly that Buddhism could not possibly have influenced Christianity. Some people call Buddhism an atheistic religion ; others call Buddha an agnostic and our author is among them. I am not prepared to subscribe to either of these views. I am powerfully convinced that if Buddha had been either an atheist or an agnostic, his religion could not have spread so easily and widely and could not have brought hundreds of millions of God's creatures under its sway.

If Buddha had been an atheist or an agnostic, there would have been lacking in him that fire of enthusiasm which alone can win over mankind. The doctrine of Buddha would then have been equivalent to this: "a life-long struggle, a life-long war to overcome the demon of desire and egoism and all this to end in utter nothingness." This is absurd, this is preposterous. Such a doctrine cannot win a single right-thinking person to its side.

But it must be conceded that the idea of God, of a personal Deity is so much in the back-ground in Buddhism, that some thinkers have honestly called Buddha an atheist, others an agnostic.

A system in which the idea of God is so much in the back ground must have been abhorrent to Christians and Christianity which is imbued through and through with the idea of the Deity. According to Christianity, God is not only our creator and the creator of the universe but is present with us most intimately. God stands to a Christian in the relation of a father to his children. This was most powerfully the attitude of Christianity in its earliest days. It was therefore absolutely impossible for Christianity to draw for its inspiration upon Buddhism. This was, of course, on the assumed hypothesis that religions are humanly developed. On the truer hypothesis, which is accepted by all the followers of true religions, that peculiarly religious truths are revealed to mankind by God no question of Christianity being based on Buddhism or any other religion can possibly arise.

CHAPTER V.

“ INTERPRETATION OF THE VEDAS.”

IN this chapter I mean to discuss the question of the interpretation of the Vedas. But, in order to disillusionise the reader and to forestall a query of our Arya friends, I must state at the outset that I am unacquainted with the Sanskrit language and therefore cannot read the Vedas in the original.

Here our Arya friends would come down upon me, would hurl their anathemas at my Head and would ask me with a great show of self-satisfaction, “ How dare you discuss the question of the meaning of the Vedas when you don’t know the Sanskrit language.” But I will presently remove their astonishment and satisfy their curiosity.

At least ^{99.9%} 95 per cent. of our Arya friends do not know Sanskrit and cannot read and understand the Vedas for themselves, and the number of those who can read and fully understand all the four Vedas is still smaller ; yet each and every one of our Arya friends is ready to assert and prepared to maintain with all possible vehemence that the interpretations put upon the Vedas by Swami Dayanand Saraswati are correct, while the interpretations of all other learned Pandits and scholars, whether they be Indian or European, are incorrect, in so far as they do not tally with the interpretations of the Sawami.

If 97 per cent. of our Arya friends are justified in making such bold assertions and maintaining such an attitude, I am equally justified in discussing the question of the interpretation of the Vedas.

Sawami Dayanand Saraswati in his Satyarath Prakash chapter (11) has discussed all the indigenous religions and creeds of India since the time of Mahabharath up to his own days. According to the Sawami, the war of Mahabharat took place 5,000 years ago and the true Vedic religion had begun to

degenerate and to lie misunderstood since 1,000 years before Mahabharath, and after Mahabharath, it was altogether superseded by false or superstitious creeds.

During this enormously long period of 5,000 years or more, the Sawami does not find a single creed, a single religion, which inculcated the true doctrines of the Vedas, nor he finds among Brahmans a single Pandit, a single scholar known to history who correctly understood and taught the Vedas according to their true spirit.

First, a sect of Bom Margies which is older than Buddhism and Jainism receives the attention of our Sawami. He says that the Brahmans were the originators of this sect, that according to this sect the drinking of wine and taking of animal food is fully allowed. But, according to the Sawami, the Bom Margies utterly failed to understand the Vedas and their doctrines were quite opposed to the Vedic doctrines.

The misdeeds of Bom Margies brought into existence the religions of Buddhism and Jainism. Both of these are atheistic religions, and are, according to the Sawami, quite opposed to the teachings of the Vedas. Buddhism in the form of Jainism spread in India like jungle fire and in a very short time covered the whole face of the Peninsula. Brahmans too, began to go over to the side of the victorious religion. Buddhism remained the chief religion of India for many centuries. But during all this period Buddhists could never learn the true religion of the Vedas from its original source or from the many learned Brahmans who had gone over to the side of Buddhism. A great figure then arose in the person of Shankra Chariya to drive away Buddhism and Jainism from India. He fought the battles of the Vedic religion and by his incomparable personality and learning practically banished Buddhism from India.

Shankra Chariya also founded the school of Neo Vedantism and in Vedantism the Hindu spiritual philosophy rose to its

highest apex. I would like any one to point out anything in the system of our Arya friends which approaches even remotely the heights to which Hindu spiritual philosophy has reached under the Vedanta.

This high personage too, who did such signal service to Hinduism and whose Vedic learning is undisputed, did not correctly understand the Vedas according to our Swami, for the Swami says that the creed of Shankra Chariya, namely, "that eternal God alone is the Creator of the universe, that our souls and universe are not real, but are mere delusions. God alone creates and annihilates. God by his providence brings all things and brings into existence, and he is the only actor in the drama of the universe," is not in accordance with the Vedas and is untrue. Shankra Chariya did not raise his voice against the Indian caste system ; on the contrary, he fully upheld the bonds of caste.

In this too, Shankra Chariya did not correctly understand the Vedic passage about caste, according to the Swami and our Arya friends.

If Shankra Chariya could not understand the Vedas it is really useless and shere waste of time to read and try to undderstand the Vedas for the attempt is sure to end in failure.

This is about the intellectual side of Shankra Chariya; his moral side too, has not escaped our Swami's notice. In order to explain away these doctrines of Shankra Chariya, the Swami says, "It is probable that Shankra Chariya adopted this creed in order to refute the doctrines of Jainism, because in order to serve the needs of the times many *selfish people among the learned* adopt views contrary to their real beliefs."

So the learned Shankra Chariya for all his pains and for all his unparalleled services to Hinduism is dubbed by the *self-sufficient* Swami as *selfish*. I wonder whether the Swami ever

pondered over the fact that this Shankra Chariya—though he, according to the Swami, did not correctly understand the Vedas, or if he correctly understood them, did not make his true beliefs public, consequently lacked the quality of sincerity which is so and necessary for the success of one's mission—as an effect of his ten year's preaching of the Hindu religion, insincere as he was, could so profoundly change the religious face of India and could so effectively deal Buddhism its death-blow.

What is the record of our Swami's success in comparison to that of Shankra Chariya? Nothing. I wonder whether the Swami ever thought within himself as to how these different degrees of success are to be explained. How is it that the Swami who understood the Vedas so well as no one during the past 5,000 years had done, and who, according to himself is the embodiment of sincerity itself, should show so poor results as compared with the achievements of Shankra Chariya. I would like my Arya friends to furnish some philosophical explanation of this paradoxical phenomena.

The mission of Shankra Chariya had restored Vedic learning and Vedic study to its full height ; but even among the disciples and followers of Shankra Chariya no learned Pandit arose who could, according to the Swami and our Arya friends, correctly understand and interpret the Vedas.

One Nishchal Das is one of the most famous followers of Shankra Chariya. He is supposed to be a very learned man and an author ; but he too did not understand the Vedas, according to our Swami.

Shiwites and Vishunaites arose among the Hindus. These sects had many learned men among their exponents—among the exponents of Vishnuism, the well-known names are those of Shath Kope, Mooni Dahan or Yadnachariya and Ramanuj—but none of these could correctly understand or rightly interpret the Vedas, according to the learned Swami.

Kabir Dass and Guru-nanak and their teachings are then dealt with by our Swami. These, of course, are minor personalities according to the Swami, and are absolutely ignorant of the Vedas and Vedic learning

Such is the history of the religious life of India that during the period of 5,000 years from the war of Mahabharat to our own times, *i. e.* during this long, long period India not only could not produce any original religious thinker worth the name according to our Arya friends, but also failed to produce any known person sufficiently learned to understand and teach the Vedas correctly. This is the view of the Swami and of our Arya friends, and I would very much like my Arya friends to mention the name of any learned personage or body of persons who may have lived during these five thousands years, and who, according to them, may have correctly understood and rightly taught the Vedas.

According to the learned Swami the Pandits and those learned in the Vedas during these five thousands years either did not correctly understand the Vedas, or if they understood them correctly they misinterpreted them to the people to serve their own ends.

This is the greatest diatribe imaginable against the Indian intellect and Indian character and to hold this view is to do the greatest injustice to India intellectually and morally.

Is the Indian mind so barren and the Indian intellect so impotent and poor that during these five thousand years the Vedas were never correctly understood by Indians, or is the Indian mind so prejudiced, so fanatical and such a slave to custom that during this period of thousands of years it could never rise above the accepted beliefs, take out the true doctrines from the Vedas and inculcate them to humanity; and was it left for the Swami and his followers to interpret and preach the Vedas for the first time according to their true sense? I, for one,

consider it impossible for myself to take such a low view of Indian intellect and Indian character. We, Indians find among ourselves in our own days such intellectual giants and leaders of thought as the father of Indian politics, Mr. Dadabhoy Nowrojee, the Honourable Mr. Gokhale, the late R. C. Datt. We also see that there is no department of modern science and art in which some one or other of India's sons has not shone and shone with credit in competition with European scholars and scientists.

A few centuries back we remember the figures of Beerbal and Raja Todermal who adorned the Darbar of Akbar and whose breadth of view and intellectual greatness is known to every body.

If we can shine in modern times in every department of life, how it was that with regard to religion, our minds had become so dull and obtuse during these 5,000 years that we read and re-read the Vedas, but could never arrive at its true meaning.

Is the language in which Vedas are written so very vague, ambiguous and equivocal that these were never correctly understood during the 5,000 years that preceded the advent of the Swami even by such renowned and justly revered personages as Shankra Chariya, the grand and majestic figure that drove Buddhism out of India. If the language is so, it defeats its own purpose, because where is the use of a revelation if it is couched in a language so unintelligible that it would remain misunderstood in the place of its birth for thousands of years. But it is not to be expected that the learned Swami and our Arya friends would stick to any view and to all its consequences consistently. In the very chapter of his Satiarath Prakash in which the learned Swami criticises, depreciates and denounces all the indigenous religions of Arya Varta, both past and present, and in which he attempts to show that these religions are not founded on the Vedas, but contain if anything a travesty of Vedic doctrines, the Swami puts forward the claim that Arya Varta is the

source of all the learning of the world and that all learning and knowledge has spread into the world from Arya Virta.

Let me quote the Swami himself "All the knowledge that has spread over the face of the earth has spread from Arya Virta. Egypt learnt from Arya Virta, Greece from Egypt, Rome from Greece, Europe from Rome, and America and other countries from Europe" (How very positive, how very categorical the attributes which are seldom to be met with in a truly educated man.) This is also the view of the generality of our Arya friends who are never tired of asserting in season and out of season that Arya Virta has taught all knowledge to the world though their own extent of learning may be confined to a few Urdu and Bhasha books or to a few English readers, and though they may have never heard as to what was taught in Egypt, Greece and Rome in the days of their glory, and for the matter of that the Swami himself knew nothing whatever about Greek, Roman or Egyptian learning and his views on this head are of no more weight than the views of the ordinary Arya gentlemen.

We hold that India mind is inferior to none in intellectual acumen or in the capacity for learning, but we deny that India has or ever had had the monopoly of learning. Such a view would be absurd and would attribute injustice to God in as much as He would have to be supposed to have bestowed one people only with all his intellectual gifts.

But in order to please our Arya friends we are going to accept their contention that India is the source of all knowledge, that India has taught all sciences and arts to the world, that logic, philosophy, astronomy and mathematics are all learnt by the world from one source. *i. e.*, Arya Virta ; but how our Arya friends are to explain that the inventors of these sciences or the sons and grandsons of these inventors became so dull as not to be able to understand the Vedas correctly for 5,000 years.

Is such high level of Indian intellectuality compatible with

of a book for 5,000 years I wonder whether the Swami while writing chapter (11) of his Satyarath Prakash ever put this question to himself and pondered over its possible answer ?

I also put this question to our Arya friends and ask them to think over it calmly and with an unbiassed mind and discover an answer for their own satisfaction.

I also ask those of my Arya friends who are not learned in the Vedas and who cannot read the Vedas for themselves if in view of the facts above stated they are justified in holding that the interpretations of the Vedas as given to them by the Swami are correct and worthy of acceptance in preference to the interpretations of the learned Pandits of the orthodox school and to the interpretations of the European Scholars ?

The last named Arya friends of ours may answer that what the Swami teaches us on the authority of the Vedas, appears to us more reasonable than what is taught under the same authority by the orthodox Hindus, and therefore we accept the Swami's interpretations as correct, but this answer does not really solve the difficulty.

The Swami's interpretations may appear to you to be more reasonable but may not at the same time be the correct interpretations of the Vedas I will give an example. The passage about caste in the Ved is interpreted by the orthodox Hindus to mean the establishment of the four well-known castes. The Swami interprets it to mean as inculcating simply the division of labour. To you my Arya friends not learned in the Vedas this interpretation of the Swami appears more reasonable and why, because through extraneous influences of Christianity and Islam you have come to regard the caste system of India as pernicious to society and therefore you prefer the Swami's interpretation. You have, therefore, to be very cautious. You have to make it sure that it is not the prejudice created in your minds by the influences of Christianity and Islam which makes

you prefer the interpretations and innovations of the Swami to the old and orthodox doctrines of your faith. For, if you are led by these prejudices to accept the interpretations of the Swami you won't necessarily be the true followers of the Vedas which you mean to be.

I also ask you my Arya friends in general do you after calmly and quietly considering the whole matter, find it reasonable and conformable to common experience of humanity to hold that the Swami's interpretations are preferable to the interpretations of all those who had gone before him for the last 5,000 years ? I also want you to consider if any body else were to put forward a similar claim in respect of his religious book or any scientific theory, would you be ready to accept his proposition ?

Is it not possible, nay is it not very likely that a few years hence, say 10 or 25, some new scholars should turn up and should declare the Swami's interpretations as unfounded and inaccurate just as the Swami has done with regard to the interpretations of all those who had gone before him including Shankra Chariya, though the Swami was, by no means, a superior personality to Shankra Charlya, look at the matter from whatever point of view you like, whether intellectually, morally or spiritually.

While reading and considering the creed of the Swami carefully, don't you discern in it unmistakeable traces of the creed of Nastick (atheistic) philosophers tacked on to the belief in the Doity.?

Is not the Swami's theory about the non-creation and non-perishability of matter an exact prototype of the views of materialistic philosophers of to-day and the Nastick philosophers of ancient India.?

فا عتبرو يا ادلى الابصار

(Look then and beware ye who have got eyes to see.)

CHAPTER VI.

یارب آن سرز فکن در دل دیوانه ما * که کلیم آیدر آتش برآ از خانه ما

“IS THE UNIVERSE CREATED OUT OF SOMETHING ?”

OUR Arya friends hold and allege with great flourish and with a great show of insight into philosophy and metaphysics and with apparent pride and self-satisfaction that this universe could not have been created out of nothing, that to create *a thing out of nothing* is an impossibility. I say on the contrary that to create *a thing* out of any *existing thing* is not only an impossibility but a contradiction in terms. If a thing is created at all it must be created out of *nothing* or it is not created at all. If creation means anything it means *creation* out of *nothing* or it means nothing at all.

If our souls are self-existent, are co-eternal with God, and if matter out of which our bodies are made is also co-existent with God (as our Arya friends allege) and if our coming into being means the conjunction of this soul and matter both self-existent and co-eternal with God, there is *no creation* at all. There is only at best *a making* like that of a potter and not a creation. If a potter takes mud out of a pond, kneads and fashions it into beautiful wares, we don't call him a creator, but only a maker of these wares. A carpenter cuts and carves wood, makes different articles of furniture, we don't call the carpenter a creator of these articles but only a maker.

A mason builds a grand palace or a beautiful temple out of given and pre-existing materials, he is called for all his pains a builder and not a creator.

We have brought different powers of nature under our control and by means of these we run trains, sail on the surface of the ocean, send telegrams either by means of wire or without it, make aeroplanes and fly through the air, but we are not the creators of these powers, but only utilizers and controllers of them.

God, therefore, if he makes use of existing materials and fashions them into new things into sun, moon, and stars, what right has he got to be called a creator of these things.

God, therefore, is not our creator or that of the Universe but at best only a maker (and-I will show later on that on these premises this making too is not possibly the work of God). Every one would concede that the words *create* and *make* connote quite different and distinct ideas, and words connoting these two different ideas exist in every language, whether it be Greek or Latin, Hebrew or Arabic, Sanskrit or Pali, and these words have existed in these languages in all times and in all ages.

Since the word *create* has existed in all climes and ages and in languages all the world over, it follows that the idea connoted by this word is present everywhere and has been present since the very creation. Since this idea has been so persistently present everywhere and since all time the idea must represent *a fact, a reality, and not a myth, a fiction*. Because the myths and fictions of one age are exploded in another.

So much by way of preface. Now for the subject itself. The subject necessarily resolves itself into two parts.

(1) Whether this physical world has been created by God out of nothing or out of pre-existing eternal matter.

(2) Whether our Souls or 'Jiwas' are self-existent and eternal, or have they been created by God ?

Let us take up the former question first. Let us also assume that God has brought this physical world into existence out of pre-existing primeordeal matter and see to what conclusions the assumption leads.

Matter is according to the theory we are discussing self-existent and eternal and so are all its qualities. God cannot bring into existence or annihilate a particle of matter, nor can he add to or subtract anything from the qualities of matter.

After these assumptions let us see where in the physical world as it now stands and as we see it, the agency of God is traceable.

A seed falls on the ground. If the ground is not stony or rocky or absolutely barren and if sufficient heat and moisture are available, in short, if all the necessary physical conditions requisite for the growing of a tree are there, the seed would take root, germinate and grow into a big and shady tree and would fructify in due course.

Either the seed possesses the potentiality or latent power to grow into a big shady tree if the necessary physical conditions were available or it did not. If it did not, God could not possibly confer that power upon it and consequently, the tree would never grow. If it possessed that power, the tree would naturally grow and there would be no agency of God in the coming of the tree into existence.

It is no use asserting as our Arya friends do assert and as Swami Dayanand Saraswati has also asserted, that the intricacy of workmanship to be noticed in leaves and flowers points to the agency of God, because if a seed grows into a big shady tree or into a flower plant governed by natural physical causes the workmanship in leaves and flowers must of necessity be the result of those natural causes. But if it be assumed that when a tree or a flower plant is growing God has to manufacture their leaves and flowers, the assertion would lead to a very serious objection. For a seed falls into the ground governed by natural physical causes and it takes root and germinates under the influence of the same causes. Millions and millions of seeds are thus falling and germinating every moment. All this is happening independently of God's will, for the natural physical causes have evolved as a consequence of the inherent and eternal qualities of matter, and God cannot possibly stop all this. If it be supposed that God has to manufacture and shape the leaves and flowers of all these millions of trees, He will have to do all this whether He wills it or not and this involves a sort of compulsion upon the Deity, which is absurd,

Similarly we plough the land, sow it with different kinds of crops. Rain comes in time and the crops, grow. Heat and air help in the growing of our crops, and our crops ripen by means of the heat of the sun in due course. In all this nowhere the agency of God comes in.

Through the heat of the sun, water is changed into vapour which governed by physical causes rises into the air, gathers in the form of clouds, and when there is sufficient depression in the atmosphere falls on earth in the form of rain which refreshes and fructifies the parched earth and supplies man and beast with means of livelihood.

I am not alone in holding this view. The Swami himself has said in his *Satyartha Prakash*, Chapter VII, para 9, "Occasionally one unthinking object can be the cause of the making or destruction of another unthinking object. For example the God-made seeds on falling on the ground and getting necessary moisture change into trees and are destroyed by coming into contact with such unthinking objects as fire and the like." The air we breathe, the soil we tread on are of service to us independently of God's will. The heavenly bodies are inter-dependent upon one another and are governed by physical laws, such as the law of attraction, and these laws are the results of the inherent qualities of matter. Governed by these laws the moon revolves round the earth, and the earth and other heavenly bodies round the sun and our universe pursues its ordinary course without any interference by any outside agency. Day and night, the seasons of the year are the result of the motions of these heavenly bodies and in all this God's agency is nowhere to be seen and cannot possibly exist. For either the sun has got the power to raise vapours from the earth and sea or he has not; if he has not, God cannot confer that power upon the sun. if he has, the vapours go up into the air by the agency of the sun alone, and God's agency does not come in. Similar arguments hold good with regard to all the physical laws of our world and in the working of these laws the agency of God nowhere comes in.

It may also be noted that on the hypothesis of our Arya friends and on the materialistic theory with which the said hypothesis corresponds these physical laws *cannot possibly be* of God's creation. Take for example the law of attraction; if we throw a stone into the air it falls to the ground drawn thither by the force of attraction that is in the earth. Could God bring into existence the power of attraction, if it were not inherent in matter itself? Certainly not, similarly fire burns and water quenches the fire. The fire will burn and the water will quench the fire, whether God wills it or not. All the variations and changes, that are produced in our physical world as a result of the qualities of matter and the physical laws that are evolved from those qualities and govern that matter, take place independently of God's will or agency. So God, after making our physical world once out of primordial matter ceases to have any connection with the working of that world and *practically becomes* "Akarma" as far as the working of our physical world is concerned.

Are our Arya friends prepared to accept this conclusion? but whether they be prepared or not the conclusion is inevitable from the premises which they have accepted.

But here arises a fine point for consideration, namely, why should we not worship the sun, the moon, the stars, and the mother-earth along with God as people of old used to do and as some people still do and what right have our Arya friends got to condemn the practices of the worshippers of sun, moon and stars.

If they think over the logical consequences of their accepted premises, they will find that they have not only no right to condemn the votaries of the heavenly bodies but are themselves in duty bound to become such votaries.

Why do we worship God, or better still why ought we to worship God. The answer to this question from the point of view of our Arya friends can be no other than that *we ought to*

worship God in gratitude for certain benefits which He confers upon us and for no other reason.

It is all very well to talk in general terms that God is "Sarv Shaktiman," omnipotent, that he is all in all and that he is therefore the only worthy object of our worship. There is no good talking of these things. The Swami has defined God for us full well and we know exactly how we stand in relation to God and what God can do and what he cannot and therefore we should see how far God is entitled to our hearts' reverence and how far other entities deserve the same reverence and worship.

If we examine the question of worship and devotion to the Deity we find that such devotion is based on the following three grounds :—

1. That we owe our being, our very existence to God and therefore in duty bound, we lay ourselves in prayer to the Deity who gave us our very being.
2. That our worship of the Deity, confers upon us spiritual benefits, that is, our souls become higher and purer, and that by means of such worship an un-measurable improvement is effected in the qualities and attributes of our souls.
3. That we worship God, because He supplies us with our physical needs and Comforts.

According to the doctrines of the learned Swami and the creed of our Arya friends the first two motives or grounds for worshipping the Deity cannot possibly exist.

We are self-existent and co-eternal with God, and therefore the motive to worship the Deity for the reason, that He brought us into being cannot possibly exist.

Similarly we being eternal all our qualities and attributes must be and are eternal according to our Arya friends. There

can therefore be no increase or decrease, improvement or deterioration in the qualities or attributes of our souls whether we worship God or not. God cannot add to or subtract from the inherent qualities of our souls. We, therefore cannot become more spiritual, if we do worship or more beastly if we refuse to worship God. As far as the inherent nature of our souls is concerned, it will remain the same whether we spend our lives in the contemplation of and devotion to the Deity or in the pursuit of the most beastly and licentious habits and never for a moment think of God and Godly things.

It may be said that though God has not created our souls, He has joined them with matter and has thus been the cause of our present existence in this world and therefore we owe Him worship under the first head. But the point is questionable. Many of us may be ready to question the right of the Deity to confine our free and independent souls in this prison of clay, but this topic will be dealt with when discussing the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. In any case from our point of view, we cannot consider the encasing of our souls in our physical bodies as a benefit conferred upon us by the Deity and therefore this act of the Deity cannot evoke feelings of thanksgiving in us.

We have therefore no motive to worship God for the first two reasons. It therefore follows that if we worship God at all we must worship Him for the third reason, *i. e.*, in gratitude for the physical comforts which He bestows upon us.

But here as reasonable beings we must see from whom we derive the greater proportion of our physical comforts—whether from God or from the sun, moon, earth and stars,

We have seen in the beginning of this article that whatever may have been the agency of God at the beginning of this world when He made cosmos out of chaos, His agency nowhere exists in the working of the physical world as it stands. The change of day and night, the changes of the seasons and all the

consequences thereof are brought about quite independently of the Deity and almost all our physical needs are supplied by these changes. Sun, moon and mother-earth by working together guided by the laws of nature which have evolved through the inherent qualities of matter supply us with food, drink and clothing, with houses to live in, with heat to protect our bodies against the inclement weather and above all with air to breathe. And in this God's agency never comes in.

Even in the beginning God has been only one of the causes of the coming into being of this world. For the Swami has laid down in his Satyārtha Prakash and the belief is devoutly held by our Arya friends that God is only the "Nimath Karan" (or subjective cause) of this world, while the material cause (upadan karan) of the world is matter or "prakriti."

We therefore see that as far as our physical comforts are concerned we get far greater benefits from sun, moon, earth and stars, and above all from matter than we do from God, and as there is no reason for us to worship God except for the physical comforts which he bestows upon us, we are as much, if not more, bound to worship sun, moon, earth, stars and above all matter as we are to worship God. If we fail to worship these heavenly bodies and above all their progenitor matter, we shall be as much sinful and wanting in our duty as when we fail to worship God.

The condemnation of the worship of sun, moon, earth and stars by our Arya friends is therefore not only illogical, but positively sinful.

Such are the conclusions to which the assumption, that this physical world has been created out of pre-existing matter, logically leads. I will ask my Arya friends to ponder over these conclusions which are the inevitable consequences of the theories of creation inculcated by the Swami and then see if they are prepared to accept the position created by their assumption.

In some future chapter I shall deal with the question whether it is possible for God to make this world out of pre-existing matter

CHAPTER VII.

"THE THEORY OF CREATION."

کیم فرض ہے کہ مذکورہ عالم ایک سا جواب
 ہو آرم بھی ہر کران کوہ طرکی

In the last chapter I have shown that if matter be assumed to be self-existent and eternal like God, God's agency in the present working of the Universe is not traceable. If any of our readers are inclined to doubt my conclusions I would ask them to declare what phenomena in the working of the physical world they regard as the result of the inherent qualities of matter and what phenomena as the consequence of the agency of God. The truth of my conclusions will force itself upon them when they set themselves to prepare such a list.

In the present article I mean to show firstly that matter cannot possibly be self-existent and eternal with God and, secondly, if matter be assumed to be self-existent and co-eternal with God, God could not possibly have made our present Universe out of it.

Why is it that we enquire into and what is it that leads us to search after the cause of our present Universe? It is the stamp of changeableness, of impermanence on every thing that meets our eyes in the Universe that set us on such a quest.

If we see a thing or a phenomenon in nature there is absolutely no ground for us to seek for its cause unless we have reason to believe it to be an event, unless we have ground for supposing that it has begun to be, unless it has got the character of an effect. If any thing in nature has not got that character, we have no ground for seeking its cause. In fact, we are so mentally constituted that we shall never be led to seek after its cause.

The best course then for us is to examine our Universe and see whether it has got the character of an event or an effect,

What, then, is the result of such an examination ?

I will answer this question in the beautiful and almost poetic words of Dr. Fluit "An absolute certainty that all the things which can be seen are temporal, that every object in the Universe which presents itself to the senses has had a beginning—that the most powerful, penetrating and delicate instruments devised to assist our senses reach no cause which is not obviously also an effect.....the progress of science has completely established that everything of which our senses inform us has had a commencement, and is of a compound, derivative and dependent nature. It is not long since men had no means of proving that rocks, for example, were not as old as the earth itself—no direct means of proving that they were not eternal—but geological science is now able to tell us with confidence under what conditions, in what order and in what epochs of time they were formed.....

The limits of research are not even there reached and withhold flight science passes beyond the confines of discovered life—beyond the epochs of the formation of the oldest rocks—to a time when there was no distinction of earth and sea and atmosphere, as all were mingled together in nebulous matter ; yea, onwards to a time when our earth had no separate existence and suns, moons and stars were not yet divided and arranged into systems. If we seek then after what is eternal science tells us that it is not the earth, not the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars ; these things, when uninterrogated, tell us to look above and beyond them."

Every thing in nature, therefore, that meets our senses has got the mark of impermanence upon it. Every thing has got the character of an event or an effect, we as reasonable beings are therefore led to seek the final or uncaused cause of our Universe.

The materialistic philosophers assert that the final cause is matter. The theists cannot bring themselves to believe this hypothesis because they find that matter has not got the character

of a sufficient cause. For any cause to be the final cause of our universe it is necessary that it should also be a sufficient cause. For if our Final cause is not also a sufficient cause part of the effect or effects would remain unexplained and unaccounted for. We notice this drawback in assuming matter to be the Final cause of our universe. We see the effects of intelligence everywhere in the working of this universe which cannot be accounted for if we hold matter to be the Final cause of our universe. We find, therefore, that matter cannot by itself account for all the phenomena that we come across in our universe. Matter therefore is not a sufficient cause of our universe. In other words, if we assume matter to be the cause of our universe we must regard it as a defective cause. But we know that a defective cause cannot possibly be the true Final cause of anything. We therefore give up matter. We are forced then to regard mind and intelligence, *i. e.*, God to be the Final cause of our Universe.

If we are to hold according to the theory of Arya friends that God too cannot by Himself bring this universe into existence, God too would then be not a sufficient cause of this universe. In other words, God too would then be, like matter, a defective cause and would have to be given up.

But our Arya friends would assert that God and matter together constitute a sufficient cause of the universe and are complementary to each other. But it remains yet to be demonstrated that two defective causes can prove a sufficient cause of the perfect working of our Universe. If God and matter were complementary to each other the question would naturally arise who made them thus complementary. Two separate, eternal and independent entities cannot conceivably be complementary to each other unless a third entity makes them so, and if there be such a third entity that is our God and not either of these two. Again if God and matter are two separate, distinct and eternal entities they must be mutually exclusive, *i. e.*, where there is God there cannot be matter and where there is matter

there cannot be God. Otherwise it is not possible to conceive of matter as an eternal existence separate and distinct from God. Any one who doubts this proposition let him reflect for himself and see if he can conceive otherwise.

Again, as we have seen above, the only reason why we regard our present universe as impermanent—and every theist is bound to regard it so—is the mark of changeability that is stamped on every phenomenon of our universe.

We regard our earth to be impermanent, to be an defect because we see evident changes everywhere in it. We see that the heat that is in our earth is gradually radiating into space and our earth is year by year becoming cooler and cooler. The more the heat radiates the more its outer crust contracts. If our earth becomes sufficiently cold, its surface would become all covered with ice and would thus become uninhabitable for man and beast, its orbit would contract and when its orbit becomes sufficiently contracted it will fall into our sun and become destroyed by the tremendous impact.

This is the condition of our earth.

Every thing else that is on our earth is for more temporal as is evident to every serious observer. But every thing that is temporal is so because it is "liable to change." For if there be anything in heaven or earth which has not got the mark of changeability upon it we never seek for its cause.

Our only criterion therefore for believing a thing to be temporal is its "liability to change" and conversely our only reason for believing a thing to be eternal is its "freedom from change."

I believe that our Arya friends would concede this point and would agree with me in asserting that the only reason why they regard this universe to be impermanent and to have been originally made by God out of self-existing eternal matter is the presence of change in every thing that we see in our universe.

"Let us test the prime or deal matter by this criterion."

The most accepted materialistic theories about the original state of matter are the atomistic theory and the Nebula theory.

One class of materialistic philosophers hold that originally matter consisted of infinitesimally small atoms—thousand of which by congregating together from a perceivable particle of matter—that this universe has been formed by the different permutations and combinations of the original atoms.

According to the other, *i. e.*, the “Nebular hypothesis,” “in the beginning was formed a vast nebula of infinitely attenuated and light material and at a certain moment a movement of rotation was imparted to this mass.” (I quote this from Earnest Haeckel, a great German philosopher. I may also add here that this philosopher does not believe in the nebula hypothesis) and as a result of the rotation of this nebulous mass, all our cosmic bodies, *i. e.*, our sun, moon, earth and stars, and other suns and their planets were formed, *i. e.*, our Universe came into existence as a result of the rotation of this nebulous mass.

Whatever theory as to the original state of matter be true—whether it be supposed to have originally consisted of countless millions of atoms or of a most attenuated nebulous mass, one thing is quite clear, namely, that these atoms or this vast nebulous mass underwent many changes before our universe came into existence. These countless millions of atoms or this vast nebulous mass must therefore be regarded as subject to change, and we have already established that whatever is subject or liable to change is impermanent, temporal and not eternal. Matter therefore must logically be regarded a “temporal and not eternal.” But if the fact of matter having changed from its original state into this cosmic world is no ground for regarding matter to be “temporal” the changes that we see in our universe are no grounds for regarding our universe as temporal. If matter is eternal notwithstanding the change that it underwent, our universe “as it now stands” is also eternal notwithstanding the “changes which it undergoes.” If this is

so God disappears as a "subjective cause" of our universe. These arguments clearly show that matter is "temporal and impermanent" like every other object in nature. I now turn to consider another proposition, namely, assuming matter to be eternal, is it possible for God to make our universe out of it?

If matter be an independent entity, self-existent and co-eternal with God the question would naturally arise what it was that gave God control over matter that God moulded it into our present universe?

If there be two eternal, infinite and self-existent entities, there must be some law independent of both these entities which can give one of these entities authority over the other. It is not possible for us to conceive that one eternal entity would have control over another eternal entity without the intervention of a third entity. We cannot possibly conceive such a state of things. It may be urged that we human beings can control certain powers of nature and can mould and remould material things just as we please. If we can do this with our limited powers, why not God with his infinite power could do the same?

But the analogy is clearly misleading. We hold that both we and the universe and every thing that is in it are subject to the laws of an Infinite Power and have been brought into being by this Infinite Power, and by acting in conformity with these laws, we can control certain phenomena of nature. But this cannot hold good if we assume matter to be an "eternal" entity like God. For it is not possible to conceive of two eternal entities unless we at the same time assume them to be quite independent of each other.

But let us suppose that God acquired control over self-existent and eternal matter in some absurd manner, still another question of equal difficulty would arise. How is it that God became acquainted with the properties and attributes of matter?

Since matter and all its properties are "eternal and exist

independently" of God's will and "have existed since all eternity," there is clearly no means for God to acquire a knowledge of these properties.

These properties of matter are there, from all eternity and have existed in matter independent of God's will. These properties are not in matter because God willed them to be there. We cannot possibly conceive how God can acquire the knowledge of these properties.

We acquire the knowledge of the properties of matter by experience. Had God also to make experiments with the different particles of matter before he became acquainted with their attributes. I will ask my Arya friends to think over both these problems and find out an answer for both of them for their own satisfaction.

Again what is the reason that some of us are apt to think matter as self-existent and eternal and think God cannot bring it into existence.

The reason and the only reason that our friends or anybody else who holds this view can give in support of this proposition is that in our limited experience we don't see any corporeal thing come into existence out of nothing. We grant this proposition but ask in our turn whether in our experience "we see mind, spirit or God" produce any "physical change" in matter. The answer clearly is that we do not. So far as our experience goes do we see any change in our "physical world" due purely to "mental, spiritual or supernatural causes? Do we know of a clod of earth move from one place to another purely through the agency of mind or spirit without there being any physical cause to account for its motion. Does any motion, change of motion or cessation of motion that we know of take place in our physical world purely through the agency of mind or spirit.

As far as our "actual experience goes" the only moving power that we know of and that causes change or motion in our

universe is "force or energy" and physical science tells us that this "force or energy" is but a form or production of matter.

This force or energy is produced from matter in many and various ways. The most obvious, way of its production is the collision of two material bodies. Whenever two material bodies collide energy is generated. The severer the impact and the larger the bodies that collide the greater is the amount of energy that is generated.

Our "actual" experience therefore does not tell us that "mind or spirit" or any "incorporeal Being" can produce any change in corporeal matter.

How then God who is "incorporeal can possibly" produce any change in "corporeal" matter and transfer it from chaos into cosmos.

As far as our "actual experience" goes the production of any change in "self-existent, eternal" matter by the agency of God would appear to be as much an impossibility as the production of matter out of nothing.

If one of these inferences from our "actual experience" is correct the other is equally correct. If one is false the other is equally false. But the fact is that both these inferences are equally incorrect and false.

Now let us see what is the theory of the Swami and of our Arya friends about the creation of this universe: It is this:

The entire body of matter or "Prakiritu" was originally in a "very attenuated لطيف condition." God "made it thick كثيف and then made this universe out of it (see Satiyorath Prakash).

Can this theory stand the test of reason? The entire body of matter or "Prakiritu" was originally in a very attenuated or extremely liquid condition. There was nothing over and beyond it in the realm of matter.

How could this most attenuated matter possibly undergo any change? How could it leave its original condition. How could it become less attenuated unless there were added to it something thick and sticky from somewhere else? Where could this something thick sticky come from? Evidently from nowhere because there was nothing except God beyond this entire body of original matter. God clearly could not create this something thick and sticky.

If the entire body of matter was originally in a highly attenuated state it could not have left that state unless something material that was comparatively thick and sticky were added to it.

If we have a quantity of water we may mix it in whatever manner we like, it will always remain water. We may go on mixing it for ever and ever yet it will never leave its watery condition and will never change from liquid into solid.

Suppose that the entire body of matter was in a watery condition and there was nothing over and beyond it—the existence of heat and light too being excluded from our conception because heat and light are themselves forms of the activities of matter,—can it be supposed that this entire body of water would leave its watery condition without some material thing being added to it. Most certainly not.

How then the original attenuated matter left its attenuated condition and become gassians, fluid or solid in its constitution.

We cannot conceive that God could possibly produce such a change in it unless he possessed some comparatively thicker material to add unto it and this thicker material was nowhere.

It was therefore impossible for God to produce any change in this most attenuated matter and make our universe out of it.

If the theory of our Arya friends and of the Swamie is correct

and if God really changed the attenuated matter into thicker substances in order to make our universe out of it He must have "created this thicker material out of nothing."

The theory of the Swamie and of our Arya friends about the creation of this universe, if true, necessarily implies "the act of creation out of nothing."

The above reasoning holds good whether we apply it to the Swamie's theory or to the materialistic theories of other philosophers *i. e.*, to the atomistic theory or the nebula theory.

A favourite argument of our Arya friend is this:—"If you say that matter is created, show us any material thing that comes into existence out of nothing."

But they forget that matter together with all its qualities has already been created by God and every material thing that comes into existence must come into existence out of this previously created matter.

God certainly is not going to repeat the fiat of original creation every moment to satisfy the passing whim of those who happen to doubt his powers.

Besides the very character of a "final cause" excludes the possibility of the existence of another cause.

If besides the final cause it is necessary to assume another cause to account for an event or an effect the final cause loses its finality and ceases to be a final cause. The final cause also loses its "independence in the circumstances."

If some other cause must be assumed besides God to account for our universe, our God as final cause must be dependent upon this other cause, and "dependence" implies necessity, and necessity implies the "existence" of "some third entity" which must impose this necessity upon God,

Even the most materialistic philosopherz have been forced to admit this characteristic of a final cause because human mind is so constituted that it cannot think of a "final cause" without at the same time thinking of it as "absolutely infinite and independent" of everything else.

This is what Herbert Spencer, one of the most eminent of the materialistic philosophers of to-day has to say in respect of the nature and character of a final cause:—

"If we go a step further, and ask what is the nature of the Final cause, we are drawn by an 'inexorable logic' to certain further conclusions. Is the First cause finite or infinite? If we say finite we involve ourselves in dilemma. To think of a final cause as finite is to think of it as limited. To think of it as limited implies the conception of something beyond its limits: it is absolutely impossible to conceive a thing as bounded without conceiving a region surrounding its boundaries. What now must we say of this region? If the first cause is limited, and there consequently lies something beyond it, this something must have no First cause—must be uncaused. But if we admit that there can be "something uncaused" there is no reason to assume a cause for anything. If beyond that finite region over which the First cause extends there lies a region which we are compelled to regard as infinite, over which it does not extend—if we admit there is an infinite uncaused surrounding the finite caused—we tacitly abandon the hypothesis of causation altogether. Thus it is impossible to consider the, "First cause as finite." And if it cannot be finite it must be infinite. Another inference concerning the First cause is equally "unavoidable." It must be independent. If it is dependent it cannot be the First cause, for that must be the first cause on which it depends. It is not enough to say that it is partially dependent; since this implies some necessity which determines its partial dependence, and this necessity be it what it may, must be a higher cause, or the true first cause which is a contradiction. But to think of a First cause "as totally independent, is to think of it as that

which exists in the absence of all other existence; seeing that if the presence of any other existence is necessary, it must be partially dependent on that other existence, and so cannot be the first cause."

This is the nature of a true First cause or واجب الوجود

Those of my readers who do not agree with my reasoning and who do not feel prepared to accept the conclusions drawn in this chapter will be so good as to examine the reasoning itself and try to discover if there be flaws in the said reasoning. If there be flaws in the above reasoning they will, of course, be quite justified in rejecting the conclusions. If not, I hope they would not reject the above conclusions simply because these don't happen to tally with their own forgone conclusions.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE THEORY OF CREATION.

آتش وانی این نه خرم واس *مرسی اینجا بامبد قیس می آید

“**W**HETHER our souls are self existent and eternal; or have they been created by God.”

What are we, why are we, whence we come, whither we go, — these are questions over which sages and wise men of all climes and ages have puzzled their heads since time immemorial and have not been able to discover an answer which would satisfy one and all.

The poets, too, the true poets who are often wiser than philosophers and who often give us information, and most valuable information to boot, on the most difficult problems of life have failed to stand us in good stead in connection with the above queries. Some have been compelled to say:

لانی حیات آئی فضالی چلی ابدی خرسی نه آئی نه ابدی خرسی چلی

Others have cried out with Tennyson:

“But what am I.”

A child crying in the night,

A child crying for the light,

And with no language but a cry.

The Budhistic philosophers have held that there is no *being* there is only a “Becoming,” that we appear on the stage of the world like bubbles on the surface of the ocean to disappear and merge for ever and ever into the ocean of Eternity.

The modern philosophers, those whose theories are mostly in vogue nowadays, tell us that there is nothing of the nature of soul in us; that there is nothing added to our physical frames from over and beyond; that there is nothing supernatural in us; that in our coming into being there has been no *supernatural agency* at work; that our bodies, mind consciousness and all are but the result of the gradual, but natural, evolution of matter; that by a natural capacity, tendency or potency that is in matter

inorganic, matter changes into organic-matter from which in the course of innumerable ages animal kingdom is developed, and from the animal kingdom to man there is but a short step.

Religions, too all the religions of the world, command us in peremptory language, "know thyself", and to this Hinduism is no exception. Rishies and Munees have renounced the world, have passed their lives in self-meditation or introspection, sitting alone in caves or at the tops of bleak mountains in order to acquire self-knowledge.

The holy Prophet of Islam has said :

“مَنْ عَرَفَ نَفْسَهُ فَقَدْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ”

[He who knows his own nature verily knows what is God.]

What an amount of truth and wisdom there is in these few words ! The more we know ourselves, the more we shall know God is for ever true. The more we realize our own shortcomings, limitations and dependence, the more we shall feel assured that there is some source from which these limitations are imposed upon us, that there is some independent being who determines our dependence. The more we realize in us the hankering after the good, the beautiful and the perfect, the nearer we come to the realization of the truth that there is some being in whom truth, beauty and perfection unite and in whom these have their source. The more we know that our power and intelligence is limited, the better we realize that there is some one who is all powerful and all-intelligent.

The nature of our souls is a mystery of all mysteries to us; volumes after volumes have been written by the ancient and modern thinkers on the solution of this mystery, but still the mystery remains.

It is not alleged that no one has offered any solution of these mysteries or given answers to these questions. Thinkers and philosophers have, according to their light, given answers to all these questions. But the very variety of answers proves the difficulty of the problem.

Again, the answers of these thinkers are of no help to us. Unless we realize the truth of these answers for ourselves, the answers are meaningless to us; and this realization necessitates that each and every one of us should pass through all those stages of meditation and self-introspection which had enabled the thinkers to arrive at the answers.

On calmly reflecting over these matters one realizes the truth of the holy text:

”قل الروح من امر ربي وما أدرككم ثم من العلم الا قليل“

But why so much ignorance, why such a want of knowledge of self. Why our self or soul is such a mystery to us. Why such a variety of answers to a simple question of three words, “What am I?”

The only possible explanation of the existence of the mystery can be this; our self or soul is a mystery to us because we have had no hand in its coming into existence, because it came into existence since a mysterians power willed that it should come into existence; because the cause is unknowable therefore the effect must, from the very nature of the case, be unknowable; because God brought us into existence and since we cannot fully know the nature of God, we cannot fully understand the nature of our souls.

If this be not so, if we are self-existent and eternal like God, our nature must be an open book to us. The mystery about soul and ego would disappear for ever. We shall need nobody to tell us that we are self-existent and eternal; we shall not need the help of the Vedas to enlighten us on the point. Each and every one of us would know that he is a self-existent and eternal entity. A man in the street, a John or James, a Zuid or Bakar, a Sheo Gobind or Ram Gobind, would know it as well as a Plato or an Aristotle or a great Rishie or Moonee of Vedic times.

Religions tell us that we came into being in such and such a way and, according to the degree of our belief, we take upon

trust that we must have been brought into being in the particular manner taught by our particular religion ; and if we are of a meditative turn of mind, we come to realize to a certain extent that we came into being in such and such manner.

But our point is ; if we are self-existent and eternal, why should we need any religion or revelation to tell us how we came into being. Each and every one of us should know it from the very nature of the case intuitively without anybody's help. The veriest rustic or aboriginy must know it as well as a philosopher. The mystery should disappear for ever. " What am I," "whence I came" should be no problem for me.

No sane man can deny that the question of self-knowledge and the question of the nature of the soul are the most knotty problems that have presented themselves for solution to man. The problem does most certainly exist. No one can deny this fact. Now the question is what view as to the origin of our being, as to the origin of our souls, is compatible [with the existent of this problem.

The answer, and the only reasonable answer, to the above question is this, that man does not know his nature or the nature of his soul, because man has come into being through some cause over which he has had no control and whose nature is a mystery to him.

The existence of this problem can not possibly be compatible with any other view of the origin of our beings or our souls, nor with the view that our souls are uncreated and eternal.

It is impossible to conceive that a self-existent, eternal and intelligent entity should be so ignorant of its own nature.

Why, if our intelligent, eternal and self-existent souls are so ignorant of their own nature that they cannot know what will happen to them to-morrow or what had happened to them but yesterday, there can be absolutely no reason for supposing that God Himself understands his own nature, whether God knows

that He is temporal or eternal, finite or infinite, omnipotent or impotent.

Reasoning from analogy must lead us to attribute ignorance to God with regard to his own nature. To be a conscious, intelligent and self-existent being and to be so ignorant of one's own nature are two inconsistent ideas. If we once give our assent to the proposition that it is not necessary for a self-existent and intelligent being to know its own nature without anybody's telling him about it, we cannot reasonably resist giving assent to the proposition that it is not necessary for God to know his own nature.

The plea that our knowledge is limited and therefore we do not know our nature, is neither here nor there and cannot for a moment hold good. The plea would hold good if it were claimed that our souls should have knowledge of "God and everything in the universe", but that is not what is contended. What is claimed is simply this: We are conscious, intelligent, "Chatania" or "Moodrick;" it is admitted that our intelligence is limited, but so are all our powers and our very being. What is demanded of our intelligence is the consciousness or knowledge of this our limited self. If our consciousness, "Chatani," which is a quality inseparable from our eternal souls, limited though they may be, does not enable us to know, and to know intuitively, the nature of our souls *with their limited powers*, there is, as I have said above, absolutely no ground for supposing that God with his *unlimited intelligence* can know and fully understand his *unlimited nature*.

Once we accept our souls to be self-existent, eternal and intelligent, the question of self-knowledge is no longer a matter of belief, but a question of philosophy—a question that must be answered in the way in which other philosophical questions are answered; and since we have the most immediate and first-hand knowledge of ourselves—all other knowledge being mediate or indirect,—we shall be able to answer this question much more

easily and readily, always supposing that our souls are self-existent and uncaused entities. For if they be caused entities and brought into being by the agency of a mysterious power, the whole aspect of the question is changed.

The question for consideration then is, whether our canons of thought or laws of our consciousness allow us to hold that a *self-existent, intelligent and eternal being* can be absolutely ignorant of its own nature, or they do not. The answer most certainly is, that they do not. I believe that any one who calmly reflects over the matter would agree with me in holding that we cannot conceive otherwise.

To conceive of an intelligent existence—when that existence is not gift of any body but one's own—and to conceive of it as so ignorant of its own nature as we are is a mental impossibility. In fact, on this hypothesis there would seem to be little difference between the unthinking matter and our souls, as far as the knowledge of self is concerned.

Now, leaving aside the broader question of the knowledge of the nature of our souls, there is a simpler question of the knowledge of our existence, *i.e.*, the assurance that "I am." This is the most primitive and intuitive part of our conscious existence. We cannot conceive of a conscious being without conceiving at the same time that it is conscious of self, that it knows that it exists.

If there is an eternal and self-existent being, and it is at the same time an intelligent being, it must, from the nature of the case, be conscious of self, of its existence through all eternity. There is absolutely no ground that it should be otherwise. The burden of proof lies on anybody who asserts to the contrary. Such a person must bring very cogent reasons to induce one to hold that it is not necessary for such a being to be conscious of its existence throughout. If it is not necessary that it should be so, we have no right to call this being an intelligent and thinking being.

The one and the only case that can be urged by the holders of eternity theory plus want of self-consciousness is the case of sleep. But in sleep we have dreams, we do not loose our consciousness absolutely. Besides, our sleep does not affect our knowledge of continuity. After waking up one knows himself to be the same person as had gone to sleep. Neither our continuity of existence nor our knowledge of that continuity is affected by sleep. So the only lame argument that could be urged by our opponents does not help their case at all.

They can give no answer to the question, why do we loose our sense of continuity. Death or birth, *srishtee* or *pralai*, there is no ground why we should loose our sense of continuity. The burden of proving otherwise is clearly upon you. All the intelligent beings that we know of are also conscious of their existence as well as of the continuity of that existence, and this without anybody's telling them of it. We never see an intelligent being who is not conscious of continuity of existence.

You want us to conceive of and believe in a being who has existed from all eternity, who is self-existent and intelligent, but who has absolutely no knowledge of continuity of existence. You want us to believe a thing which is contrary to our experience. You must bring forward very good reasons before you can make us believe a thing so diametrically opposed to our experience. Have you got any reasons to put forward ; clearly none.

You say that our *jiwas* or souls, are intelligent entities, but they require a vehicle for thought. While our souls are in our human frame, the vehicle for thought is our brain; while they are in *muktee* (in the state of salvation), there is an astral body in which they live and therefore they can enjoy the blessings of *muktee*. Again, when our souls go into trees and vegetables they cannot think. When you say all this you make assertions of which there is no proof, and you put forward theories in support of which there is no evidence in the phenomena of nature.

You want our assent to propositions for which there is no proof in human experience. You reason in an illogical way. You reason from theories to facts, instead of reasoning from facts to theories which is the only right way of reasoning.

If there were no other reasons against the theory of the self-existence of our souls and their co-eternity with God, the above reasoning alone would be sufficient to condemn it for ever in the eyes of all right-thinking persons. So much for this argument.

If we think of a number of self-existent and co-eternal entities, we should also think of the relationship in which they stand. This relationship must either be conceived of as eternal like those entities, or it must be conceived of as having commenced in time. In the former case, that relationship must of necessity be conceived of as independent of the will of each and every one of those entities and consequently must be thought of as a sort of necessity imposed on each and every one of these entities, and must consequently be the work of none of them, but of some one over and beyond them. For example, we see a house. It has got a roof, a number of walls, a number of rooms and a certain number of doors. The roof, the walls, the rooms and the doors stand in certain relation to one another, but that relationship exists independently of each of them and has been imposed upon them by the mind of the builder. We see a camp table. It has got a board and a number of legs. The legs support the board and the board prevents the legs from falling off. But this relationship is not the work of the board or of the legs, but of the maker of the table. Sun, moon, earth and stars stand in certain relation to one another, but that relation is not the work of the sun or of the moon, or of the earth, or of the stars, but of an Almighty power independent of all of them.

Similarly, whenever we see a number of things stand in certain relation to one another and if that relationship is not due to the will or action of any one of them, it must, of necessity, be due to the will or action of some third entity independent of all of them.

Similarly, if God and our souls stand, since all eternity, in the relation of master and servants, of the ruler and the ruled, and if this relationship is not due to the will or action of God or of our souls, it must, from the very nature of the case, be due to the will or action of some power mightier than God and our souls. This implies a sort of compulsion upon God, which is absurd.

If the relationship between God and our souls is due to the will or action of God, it must have commenced in time, and therefore a time must be conceived of, when such relationship did not exist, a time when God had no servants and we had no Master. If this be so, this relationship must have come into existence in either of the two ways:—Firstly, our souls in old, old antiquity sat in council and elected God as their president. Secondly, God, on account of his superiour powers, obtained mastery over us by force. In the former case we must naturally have the right to depose God from his presidentship. In the latter case, God's government commences in tyranny and we cannot expect much justice from him. Both the conclusions lead to *reductio ad absurdum*.

From what has been said above it follows that we cannot conceive of a relationship, between a number of entities which is not either due to the will of one of those entities or has been imposed upon them by a third entity which is independent of all those entities.

But it may be objected that all the relationships that I have give examples of are such as have begun to be, or are such as have commenced in time, while the relationship between God and our souls is a relationship which is eternal, which had had no commencement in time, and that, therefore I am not right in reasoning from other relationships to the relationship between God and our souls. But if this objection be regarded as valid, all our reasoning from the facts of our experience which leads us to a knowledge of God and his attributes would become invalid.

We experience intellectual power, sense of justice and goodness within ourselves, and by a process of mental reasoning we are led to believe that there must be a being who is all-powerful and all-intelligent and who is perfectly just and good. In the phenomena of nature we see a process of cause and effect going on, but none of the causes that fall within our experience are the final causes of the effects that they produce : our knowledge of this process of cause and effect inevitably leads us to a final cause or *uncaused* cause of the phenomena of our universe, *i. e.*, God.

So we come to the knowledge of God by reasoning from the facts of our experience. If we give up this process of reasoning, we must be prepared to give up all pretensions to the knowledge of God. But if this process of reasoning is valid for all other purposes, it is equally valid for ascertaining the nature of the relationship between God and our souls.

It follows, therefore, that since we do not know of any relationship which is not either due to the will of one of its component parts or to the action of some third entity, we cannot conceive that the relation of master and servant, of ruler and ruled, between God and man, is neither due to the will of God or man, nor to the action of a third entity.

But you can say, "although all this reasoning from experience leads to an opposite conclusion, we can still conceive a relationship the component parts of which are self-existent and eternal and stand in certain relation to each other, even though that relation is not due to the will or action of any one of them." If you can conceive such a state of things, we can, of course, have no right to object. If any one will conceive an impossibility, no body has any right to object ; others may regret his want of mental equilibrium, but they cannot object.

But in this connection I would put forward only one point for consideration. Supposing that such a state of things is perfectly conceivable, it does not follow that it exists ; for everything conceivable is not necessarily actual.

What is conceivable is a mere possibility, and not an actuality. There must be extraneous evidence to make us regard our possibility as an actuality. But does any such evidence exist? The relationship that we have conceived of is between God and our souls.

Reasoning from certain facts of our experience inevitably leads us to believe in the existence of God. Constituted as we are, with our limited powers we cannot help believing that there must be some being who imposes these limitations upon us. But are there any similar facts in our experience or is there any mental necessity which must lead us to hold that our souls must, like God, be self-existent and eternal? Can we honestly answer this question in the affirmative. Of course, not. In fact, there is any amount of evidence to lead us to hold a contrary view. So even if such a state of things be conceivable, it is not actual.

To sum up, we are so ignorant of the nature of our souls, thinkers and philosophers have given such a variety of answers to the simple question, "What am I," we are not conscious of our existence throughout the past, we are not conscious of the continuity of our existence. All this is absolutely incompatible with the view that we are self-existent and co-eternal with the Deity.

Again, the relationship in which God and our souls stand must be due to the will of God. If so, that relationship must have commenced in time and our souls must have begun to be. Any other view with regard to the relationship between God and our souls is absolutely inconceivable.

The conclusion, therefore, is that our souls are not self-existent and co-eternal with the Deity, but have been brought into being by the will of an unfathomable and Almighty Power whose nature is a mystery to us; and hence it is that we cannot fully understand our own nature. "فَتَدَبَّرْ" (stop and think.)



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